

**A Brief History  
of  
Southern Alberta**

**"The Short Grass Area"**

**by SENATOR F. W. GERSHAW**























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## *Foreword*

An attempt has been made in the following pages to assemble some of the records of events in the early history of Southern Alberta. It is fragmentary and, at times, the events are not in sequence. It is nearly all from the records in the Library of Parliament and an effort has been made to discard anything in the nature of fiction. The truth is really strange and startling enough when it is recalled that less than 100 years ago the great short grass area was occupied only by buffalo and nomadic bands of Indians. Explorers, a few pioneer settlers, traders and missionaries came first. In 1874 the N.W.M. Police arrived, making life and property relatively safe.

Great herds of cattle have taken the place of the buffalo. Lands have been cultivated and irrigation provided for the drought-stricken area.

Roads, railways, towns and cities have been constructed. Schools and churches have been provided so that, as population increased, there was a great change in the social life and living conditions. The automobile, the radio, the mail carrier have made life less lonely and more interesting. People of different nationalities live in harmony and good will. Neighbourliness is everywhere in evidence. There are, at times, disturbing factors but, unless some great disaster arrives, future generations in this area should be the happiest people on earth.

## *Early Records*

### **The Wanderers Arrive**

The area referred to in the following pages is often called "Sunny Southern Alberta." The records that have been preserved from the days when it was "The Great Lone Land," up to the present contain many stories rich in human interest. These records should not be allowed to drift into the limbo of forgotten things because they indicate the great debt that we of the present generation owe to the early pioneers of the area.

The best available information we have is that the earliest human wanderers to come to this prairie region came from the heart of Asia. They probably crossed the narrow Behring Strait by canoes in summer, or on the ice in winter. They came in families or in hundreds, hunting and fishing as they migrated, staying for years or for centuries in suitable places and then moving on in their endless search for better conditions as their numbers increased.

Some went along the north coast and their descendants are called Eskimos. Some followed the west coast to Mexico. The ones we are concerned with spread over the plains and, although they did not realize it, they discovered a new world. These people had long, black hair, copper-colored skin and high cheek bones. They dressed in the skins of animals and lived on wild berries, herbs and the flesh of animals.

When Christopher Columbus landed on an island near the shores of America in 1492, he thought he had reached India. He called the natives who lived there "Indians" and the name has applied to the race in North America ever since. They found in Southern



Alberta a land of open prairie and rolling hills which increase in size as the traveller proceeds westward to the foot of the Rockies.

With the exception of the Milk River district in the south, which is part of the Missouri system, the whole country is drained by the South Saskatchewan and its many tributaries. The streams and rivers run in deep valleys and between steep banks. At places, these banks are very high and even overhanging. In days long gone by, stampeding herds of buffalo have dashed over them to meet a horrible death on the crags and rocks below.

It is a semi-arid region because, although the soil is fertile, the average rainfall is about 13 inches and has been as low as 7.9 inches.

Unfortunately, the moisture often does not come at the time that it is most needed. There are in the growing season long, rainless periods with hot, dry winds. There is a frost-free period of 112 days on the average.

The altitude is about 2,181 feet over most of the district but, on the Cypress Hills and at Banff, the altitude is 4,534 feet. The soil is a little sandy in the eastern part and there is a deep, rich loam in the foothills. There are some shrubs along the streams but no trees on the open prairie. It is the short grass area and there are many varieties of nutritious, native grasses which supported great herds of buffalo in the early period.

*These are the gardens of the desert. These the unshorn fields, boundless and beautiful, for which the speech of England has us name "The Prairies."*

In the days of Cartier and Champlain, permanent settlements were established along that great river, the St. Lawrence.

It is thought that adventurous men wandered from these villages into the west, not for the purpose of making homes on the wide prairies, but to discover a water route to the Pacific and to India. Anthony Henday, in 1754, seems to have been the very first man to explore the land drained by the South Saskatchewan River. He and David Thompson saw the nomadic tribes before their lives were influenced and changed by contacts with white men.

There was bitter tribal warfare, even in those days, but it was not so deadly because there were no guns. The warriors' equipment consisted of a bow of tough wood with a quiver of perhaps 50 arrows. He probably had a tomahawk and a stone with a groove around its surface to hold a thong of rawhide. This stone, when swung at the end of a leather thong by a powerful brave, would crush whatever part of the enemy it struck.

Scalping the fallen foe was the practice of the day and the brave with the greatest number of scalps on his belt was the great hero of the camp.

Thompson's journal states that the Blackfoot were terrified by the Snakes because they had horses and could ride them down in battle. It was when the leaves of autumn were falling in 1731 that one of these horses was killed by an arrow. The Snake Indian who had been riding him, escaped, but the noble animal that had fallen created much interest. Shortly after that, the Blackfoot secured horses from the Snake Indians who lived farther west.

The young men of the tribe were great dandies. They would decorate their bodies with white, red,

green and yellow ochre in order to be admired by the young ladies of the tribe. There were few ornaments so they strung bears' claws and deer's teeth around their necks before the days when traders brought them beads and other baubles. The women dressed in antelope skins and were graceful and active. Buffalo robes were used by all for protection in cold weather.

When not engaged in warfare, the men spent their time in horse-stealing, buffalo-hunting and gambling. The women did all the hard work and were usually the slaves and the chattels of the men. Wives were purchased by gifts and some braves had from two to five wives.

Some of the older women were highly regarded and treated the deficiency diseases successfully with roots and herbs. The superstitious beliefs of the time called for much in the way of beating of drums and shaking of rattles by the gaudily-dressed "Medicine Man".

The Sun Dance was the most colorful of the ancient Peigan ceremonies. The torture involved had to be endured with fortitude and without outcry by a young brave before he could graduate from boyhood to the status of a tribal warrior. The entire tribe gathered sometimes in the Cypress Hills to witness the trials.

The "Medicine Man" or the head squaw took a sharp knife and cut two parallel slits in the breast of the youth. The skin and muscles between these slits were loosened and a leather thong passed from one to the other beneath the flesh. The ends were tied to form a loop and the loop was tied to the top of an upright pole or to a strong branch of a tree. The youth must then tear himself free by violently



throwing himself about until the tender flesh and skin gave way. It often took hours, but the torture had to be endured without a sound or sign of the terrible suffering. Woe to the youth who failed. He was forever disgraced. Indian mothers were anxious to see their sons go through without a sound and they always watched the ceremony and were proud, indeed, if the youth was hailed as a warrior.

The first traders from the U.S.A. appeared in Southern Alberta in 1866. They were wild, lawless men who were lacking in morality and human kindness. They robbed the Indians of their valuables in exchange for vile liquor. The primitive people would do anything or give anything for whiskey and, when under its influence, committed many crimes bringing misery and suffering to innocent people.

### **The First White Woman of the West**

It is known that in 1806 a woman disguised as a young man came from the Orkney Islands in a Hudson Bay ship. After spending two or three years on this side of the Atlantic, she returned home. Her name is not known.

In 1807 the real pioneer arrived with her husband at the Red River in a fur trader's canoe from Montreal. Many canoes came together. Each was paddled by eighteen men. The trip was difficult as there were many portages and it required eight men to carry one canoe over a portage. The paddlers loved bright colors. They wore gay colored shirts and red sashes around their waists. It was their delight, as they approached a stopping place, to display their brightest colors, paddle at top speed and sing their favourite paddle song.

The woman who came west in 1807 was Mrs. Jean Legiononere. She and her husband left Three

Rivers and travelling by way of the Great Lakes reached Pembina and lived there several months in a wigwam. Then with a party of Cree Indians they made their way up to Cumberalnd House on the Saskatchewan River near Lake Winnipeg. The Indians there were excited and spent much time gazing at the white woman and her baby. They gave her a real welcome with speeches and presents. The next stop was at a place where Edmonton now stands and they spent four years there.

Mrs. Legiononere was a good horsewoman and could spend all day in the saddle on the buffalo hunts. On one occasion, while riding, her horse got out of control. She hung onto the mane with one hand and to her child with the other, till her husband, by riding across the horse's path succeeded in stopping him and helping her to dismount.

The next spring the wife of a Blackfoot Indian stole her little fair-haired boy. The white woman galloped after the Indians and rescued her son. A year later the Blackfoot family returned with some fine horses. They offered one of the best for the little boy. In sign language the offer was refused. Later two horses were offered and then the Indian said "Take all my horses and one of my children". "No, no", said the white woman, "never". She took her child in her arms, began to cry and the Blackfoot family moved away.

In 1813 the Legiononeres returned to the Red River and spent the rest of their lives on a homestead near St. Boniface. One of their daughters married a Louis Riel and their son was the leader in the rebellions of 1869-70 and 1885.

From 1807 until the Selkirk colonists arrived this active and courageous mother had the distinction

of being the only white woman on the north half of the North American Continent west of the Great Lakes.

### Old Sun's Wife

About 70 years ago the Blackfoot Chief Old Sun had the largest following of any Chief on the Canadian Plains. He had earned his popularity by his fighting record, his eloquence and his generosity in giving away rations and presents. He dressed gorgeously. He has made a place in history however because his wife sat in the Council of the nation and this is the story of how she earned that privilege.

Forty years before this she was a Peigan maiden known only in her tribe. One day she was kidnapped. In the course of the fierce tribal war the Gros Ventres had swooped down on the Peigan camp and killed and scalped a number of the Indians including her father. The maiden was caught by the invaders and swung up on a horse behind the Chief. She was bound to him by thongs of buckskin and he galloped off triumphantly toward the village of the Gros Ventres. While dashing along she managed to reach forward and steal the Chief's scalping knife from its sheath at his side.

With strength given to her by fear and desperation she plunged the blade between his ribs and it reached his heart. She then freed his body from the saddle and tossed it to the ground. Leaping to the sod beside him she not only scalped him but cut off his right arm and picked up his gun. She remounted and rode madly back to her people with all three of the valued trophies. Two of them would have made any Brave a hero and from that day forward she had the right to wear three eagle feathers. "Old



Sun" was "Young Sun" then. He was rich and powerful. He secured the love of this savage heroine by giving her people many horses. She proved that her valour was not sporadic because she often went on the war path with the Braves of the tribe and has other scalps to her credit.

### Henday

In the early history of the Hudson's Bay Company, there is a record of an expedition of one of the officers—Anthony Henday—who left York Factory at the mouth of the Nelson River and reached the foothills of the Rockies. He was the first white man ever to cross the plains of Southern Alberta and see these great mountains. He made his way along the streams and rivers until he reached Elbow on the Saskatchewan River. He found the area between the two branches of the great river to be a sportsman's paradise. There were great herds of buffalo, moose, deer and all sorts of small game.

"I went" said Henday in his journal, "with the young men of the Cree Tribe on a buffalo hunt. All were armed with bows and arrows. As many as twenty arrows would be lodged in one beast. So expert are the natives that they will take the arrows out of a buffalo when he is foaming and raging with pain and tearing the ground with his feet and horns.

On October 11th, 1754, he crossed the Red Deer River and three days later he, for the first time, met a large party of Blackfeet Indians. They were called "Blackfeet" because their moccasins were black from walking over the burned grass.

These Indians were a fierce and warlike tribe but they treated Henday kindly as his visit was a new experience for them.

The Blackfeet tribes had horses at this time, although the Indians east of them did all their travelling on foot or by canoe.

One memorable incident of Henday's visit was his formal reception in the lodge of the Great Chief. Two hundred teepees were pitched in two parallel rows. Down the highway between the tents marched the English traveller, watched from each tent by curious eyes looking for the first time on a white man.

The Great Chief's lodge was at the far end of the village and it was large enough to contain fifty persons.

He was received by the Chief seated on a sacred white buffalo skin and attended by twenty elders. He made a sign for Henday to sit on his right hand side. The pipe of peace was produced and passed around in silence. Boiled buffalo meat was brought to those assembled, in baskets made of willow twigs.

Through the interpreter, Henday told the Chief of the Blackfeet that he was sent to his country by the great leader of the white men who lived by the side of the Hudson Bay.

He invited the Chief to send his young men to him, taking with them beaver and wolf skins for which they would get in return, guns, powder, shot, beads and other commodities.

The Chief listened in silence but made little reply. The next day he said: "The white man's fort is far away. The young men know nothing about canoes." Henday did his best to get them to trade with his company but the shrewd old warrior was not greatly impressed even with the idea of getting firearms.

At the time, they were content to defend themselves and earn their daily meals with bows and arrows as their fathers before them had done. The fort was far away and the young bloods could not live without buffalo meat. They were accustomed to travel on horseback. They knew not the use of the paddle and they could not live on fish. Why should they leave their homes? They never wanted for food on the boundless plains. They followed the buffalo from place to place and bows and arrows were all they required.

He had been told that those who went to the forts of the Hudson Bay often came back hungry and sometimes they did not return.

"Such remarks" Henday recorded in his diary, "I thought exceedingly true."

### **The Buffalo**

The American Bison differs in many ways from the buffalo found in Europe, Asia and Africa. The name "Buffalo", however, has usually been applied to these shaggy lords of the plains since the days when they roamed in countless thousands from Canada to Mexico. Early explorers saw the ground covered with them as far as the eye could reach. Steamboats on rivers were forced to stop because of great herds swimming across and early railway trains in Western States were held up for hours while buffalo trotted across the right-of-way.

The first white man to see buffalo in Western Canada was Henry Kellsey. He reports seeing in 1692, thousands of these great dark brown animals roaming near the Red River in Manitoba.

When the N.W.M.P. made their amazing march westward from Manitoba in 1874, the Indians were



living on buffalo. They would eat the choice parts such as the liver and the tongue of an animal they had killed and leave the rest for the wolves. They used the skins for clothing and wigwams. The Indians then had only bows and arrows and these weapons did not cause the buffalo to stampede as did the report of guns that were used later.

Bill Cody, 1845-1917, was one who destroyed many. He served in the Civil War and fought against the Indians in U.S.A. When the Kansas Pacific Railway was being built, he contracted to supply the workmen with meat and, in 18 months, he killed 4,820 buffalo. He was called "Buffalo Bill" and organized the Great Wild West Show with which he toured Britain and other parts of Europe. It was said of him that he lived dangerously, fought bravely and played before Kings and Queens.

During the period of the greatest slaughter the Texas legislature proposed to adopt measures to save the herds from extinction. Opposition at once appeared by those who wanted to destroy the herds in order to subdue the Indians. General Sheridan stated that if the buffalo disappeared, the prairies would be covered with cattle and the cowboy would succeed the hunter in the onward march of civilization. This proved to be true as great herds of cattle came as the buffalo moved off the range.

Anthony Henday visited the area drained by the South Saskatchewan River in 1754 and was the first man to write of conditions there. He, in well-chosen words described the great herds of buffalo that he had seen.

By 1880, the buffalo of the plains were almost extinct. The Indians and traders killed some but thousands were mired in river beds, many

perished by breaking through the ice in early winter, many were chased over cut-banks and left to their terrible fate and others perished as blizzard succeeded blizzard and the snow became so deep that they could not get food. Modern weapons completed the destruction.

These lordly animals, although they failed to survive in their native state, yet they had the protective herd instinct. They moved in great bands to protect themselves against their enemies, especially the grey wolves.

The buffalo cow would go out to some nearby hollow when her young was being born. If a wolf appeared on the scene, she would give a call and the other buffalo would hurry to protect her.

Seton Thompson tells of seeing a toddling buffalo calf being guided back to the herd by its mother behind a screen of eight buffalo bulls facing the wolves with lowered horns. The calves would stay near the mother for as long as 3 years. It was a pathetic sight when a mother was shot, to see the calves show their devotion by staying with her till all were slain.

The older cows and not the bulls led the herd to a wooded area for the winter and led them out to the open prairie again in the spring.

A trader named McDonald wrote of seeing innumerable herds in 1793. A brother of a Governor of the Selkirk Colony described the scene from his canoe as he passed down the River Qu'Appelle. "Observing a good many dead buffalo in the river and mired along the banks, I spent the day counting them and was surprised to find that I had counted 7,300." The terrible odour from such places was almost beyond the endurance of the white people.

Alexander Henry also reported that he counted about 20,000 bodies while going 35 miles along a river. Great herds would come to a stream. Those behind would crowd those in front into the water and quicksand and they would never get out. In their free state they have vanished but they have left all over the prairies deeply-cut buffalo trails and well-defined paths, one above the other, on the sides of many hills, with their sharp hooves.

When they disappeared, the Indians on both sides of the line were often on the point of starvation. This created a great problem for the police of both countries.

The records show that at one time the only "plains" buffalo were a small herd in Montana. The owner offered them to the U.S.A. Government but could not make a sale. Hon. Frank Oliver advised the Canadian Government to buy the herd. Sir Wilfrid Laurier approved, saying in his eloquent way: "Insofar as it is in the power of man, the buffalo shall not perish from the earth."

The herd was purchased, taken to Wainwright Park in Alberta and it rapidly increased in numbers.

In 1925, when the pasture at Wainwright was becoming exhausted, some of the young buffalo were taken to Elk Island Park, near Edmonton, and to Banff. The greater number was moved to Wood Buffalo Park in the far North near Fort Smith. They were taken by train to Waterways. They were there unloaded, fed, watered and rested for 2 days. Then, under direction of Colonel Jim Cornwall, they were loaded on barges and towed slowly by steamboats to their destination. In the years 1925-1928, about 6,000 were taken from Wainwright. Those left were old and unhealthy and,

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when the park was required in 1942 for military purposes, the remaining buffalo were disposed of. They are doing well in captivity and constitute a link between present-day conditions and the days when they were the lords of the Plains.



## *The Missionaries*

*"I pledge my life and honour,  
To serve as best I can,  
My God, my King, my Country,  
And the brotherhood of man."*

The first people to go into a new country are the explorers. Then traders and missionaries venture into the unknown areas.

The early Christian missionaries who came into the West endured hardships of which we now have little conception. They would paddle all day when not accustomed to such exhausting work. They would spend nights in wretched wigwams; crowded, filthy, ill smelling and be disturbed with barking dogs and flies and vermin. Their clerical clothing was unfitted for wading through sloughs or carrying boats across portages. The food was often revolting and they were blamed for any misfortune.

They were devoted to their high calling and they thought not of their own comforts.

They learned the languages of the savage tribes, taught the young, attended to the sick and accomplished much in the way of stopping tribal wars, horse stealing, scalping and the ruinous whiskey trading.

Many names could be mentioned but the following two are typical:

### **John McDougall**

The early history of Alberta contains many records of tragedy, romance and heroism. Among



the pioneers, John McDougall rose to a high place and his record should not go to the limbo of forgotten things.

His father was a missionary among the Indians of the plains. John's work took him from Norway House to the foothills of the Rockies and ultimately to his death in a blizzard near Calgary.

Born among the Indians, John grew up with them, knew their language better than his own and was loved by old and young alike. His younger brother, David, was his constant companion and, to a great extent, shared the hardships and triumphs of his colorful career.

When 18 years of age, John was appointed a school teacher without salary and, to his little school, some 80 pupils came by canoe and trail in summer and by dog train in winter. Those pupils were bound to him by ties of friendship and appreciation.

In 1862, he started out to visit the scattered missions of the plains and from that day until his last, he spent much of his time on the lonesome prairies. Travelling was slow and difficult, the sod was unbroken and there were deep buffalo trails usually leading to the water holes and salt licks. There were bleached bones of buffalo that had perished and here and there the heads of bull buffalo still locked as they were on the day they fell in mortal combat. There were no road signs and no roads, grades, or bridges.

There were some trading posts but the gospel messenger often had to find shelter in the wretched teepees that were filthy and uncomfortable. The food was often spoiled and revolting. The dogs fought and howled all day and crowded into the tents to

sleep. No gardens were cultivated and no domestic animals were to be found. The winters were severe and food was often scarce. The buffalo provided food, clothing and shelter and when these animals became scarce, famine added to the miseries.

An epidemic of smallpox came with the starvation and, as always occurs with disaster, there was suspicion, plunder, cruelty and murder among the stricken savages.

Against these odds, John McDougall fought with all his strength. He made long trips alone with his dog team to secure medicines and food. He ministered to the living and comforted the dying. He distributed whatever gifts he could get from the trading posts to those in greatest need. He gave good advice to Sweet Grass, who was a wise Chieftain, and convinced the tribes that the government would not let them perish.

In the late 'sixties, traders from Fort Benton crossed into Canada and built Fort Whoop-up in Southern Alberta. This fort was the headquarters for the whiskey traders and wild men of the time. It was a centre for crime and, at times, the stockade would be filled with fighting, drunken Indians.

Rev. John McDougall on one occasion went into the fort to enquire about fording the river. He was dismounting when he was seized and a loud "How do, pardner" sounded in his ears. Turning, he saw a fellow far advanced in liquor who jerked him across the square and up to the counter of the bar. This bar was made of two huge logs, one on top of the other, with the upper side of the top log faced smooth. The new friend called for drinks and the bartender put two tin cups, all battered and rusty, on the log and poured liquor into them. The

Minister would not drink and the other cursed and abused him shamefully but, finally, took the two drinks himself.

Just then, one of the company said "Let us shoot for the drinks" and—bang! went his pistol. He put the blank shell into the hole his bullet had made in the log. Others did the same and shooting became general.

A big fellow then ran up to the group with a long knife in his hand. He said he would like a fight as things were getting too quiet. He had been on a prolonged drunk and looked wild, haggard, bleary-eyed and swollen-faced. He noticed the stranger and made himself very offensive in his drunken manner.

Suddenly it came out that the stranger was the Rev. John McDougall. The wild man at once changed his conduct. He profusely apologized. He was very humble and ashamed, saying that his own mother had been a Zion singer. Nothing now was too good for the Minister. He was given the best meal that could be obtained and before he left the fort he performed a Christian marriage ceremony and preached a sermon. He did much to curb lawlessness, whiskey-running and the debauching of the Indians. He prepared the way for the Mounted Police and was a great factor in preventing the tribes from going on the warpath with all that would have resulted in the way of murder and bloodshed. His words gladdened the heart of Crowfoot, the great Blackfoot Chief. His great accomplishment with the help of others was to make the prairies a land of peace and security for the builders of the railway and the incoming settlers.

His duties as chaplain and government agent a little later made it necessary for him to continue to

travel a lot. "My family", he said, "live at Morley. I live everywhere."

In January, 1917, this great "Prophet of the Plains" passed to his reward and those he had contacted and inspired mourned his passing and realized that a great humanitarian had gone from their midst. When his body passed through Calgary, the streets were thronged with a great multitude of sorrowing people. The R.N.W.M.P. formed a guard of honour.

The Chief of the Stoney Indians paid an eloquent tribute to the "Great Heart of the Plains". They had all found him to be a friend and a brother and all the tribes now have the same feeling of loneliness that he is gone.

### **Father Lacombe**

Starting life as a farm boy, Father Lacombe became one of the great pioneer heroes of the West. He had skill and courage and, because of his unselfish love of the warlike Indians, he gained their respect and homage.

The story is told that in 1695, a farmer on the banks of the St. Lawrence River went out with his wife to work in the fields. While they were gone, a party of Algonquin Indians plundered their home and carried away their daughter. For five years the search for the lost daughter was fruitless. Then an uncle made a trip to Sault Ste. Marie with a party of traders and, meeting a band of Indians, he asked if any of them could speak French. Yes, it seemed there was a woman who could interpret. She was the stolen daughter. When the trading was over, she stole away with her two children in the white men's canoe and escaped pursuit. She was welcomed

at home as one who had returned from the grave and one of these children was the ancestor of the great Christian missionary.

Albert Lacombe was educated by the parish priest and came to the West when Edmonton had a population of 150. He devoted his life to the teaching of his religion to the wandering tribes of Indians who then occupied this great lone land. They gave him a name meaning "Noble Soul" and his fame spread from the Crees in the north to the Blackfoot tribes in the south. He was so helpful in times of sickness and distress that he was referred to as the "Divine Man" and also as the "Man with the great heart." One Sunday night after his service in a camp at Battle River, the warriors of an enemy tribe burst in upon the gathering with war whoop and gunfire. The fighting lasted all night and in the morning the missionary, holding his cross aloft, advanced toward the enemy and asked them to cease the bloodshed. A bullet struck his forehead and blood ran over his face. Chief Crowfoot saw this and with all the force of his mighty voice called out: "You dogs, you have shot 'Good Heart.' You have killed your friend, the Man of Prayer." They fled in shame to the woods. "We did not know he was here," they said.

Father Lacombe worked among all the tribes of the Blackfoot Confederacy and he really loved the Indians and their cousins, the Metis. He was a great help to the N.W.M.P. in their struggles against whiskey runners and bad men from the South. He started schools, churches and hospitals, and, with volunteer help, built the first bridge constructed in the North West Territory.

When the Riel Rebellion broke out, it was largely the devotion of the Blackfeet to Father Lacombe and their trust in him that kept them off the warpath.



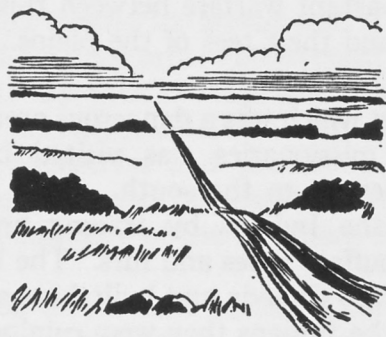
He understood the Indians and often pleaded for mercy for them before the courts.

He died at the age of 89, having lived a life of adventure beyond the wildest dreams of his youth.

*And this our life, exempt from  
public haunt,*

*Finds tongues in trees, books  
in the running brooks,*

*Sermons in stones, and good  
in every thing.*



## *The North West Mounted Police*

*"It's in giving and doing for somebody else,  
On that all life's splendor depends,  
The joy of this world when you sum it all up  
Is found in the making of friends."*

The Hudson's Bay Company had control of all the area draining into the Hudson Bay for 200 years. Traders and hunters seldom ventured into the country west of Moose Jaw and the Company did not retain posts south of the Saskatchewan River because the strong and warlike Blackfeet kept both white and red intruder from their hunting grounds. There was constant warfare between this Blackfoot confederacy and the Crees of the plains.

This district which was a dangerous area for lawful traders and missionaries was visited by reckless whiskey traders from the south. They debauched and robbed the Indians by trading firearms and whiskey for buffalo robes and furs. The bolder ones even moved into Canada and built forts as a protection against the Indians they were ruining. At such forts as "Whoop Up" an Indian would pass in a beautiful buffalo robe and get a tin cup of whiskey in return. An Indian pony would bring a quart of whiskey and, under its influence, the Indians fought, plundered and even murdered each other.

The Hudson's Bay Company by deed of surrender in 1869 transferred Rupert's Land to Canada. The government realized that there was no law enforcement and was giving the problem some thought as reports of robbery and murder were sent from this vicinity to Ottawa.

In 1873, a band of Indians was camped one summer evening in the Cypress Hills. The children were being put in bed, the men were sitting around the wigwams and the young people were dancing. A band of American traders, obsessed by some evil spirit, crept quietly up the ravine and, from a hiding place behind a cut-bank, began to shoot the defenceless Indians. About 30 of the poor Indians were killed and only a few escaped by fleeing into the hills.

When this gruesome news reached Ottawa, recruiting of the police force to be known as the North West Mounted Police started at once. Some 300 young men came forward to embark on the great adventure. These young men were to endure the heat of summer and the storms of winter. They faced sickness and hunger. They met and arrested outlaws who had little regard for human life. Their work was to establish law and order and to control great bands of Indians. By their courage and friendly but firm ways they accomplished much. They made a great name for themselves and prevented much in the way of the strife and bloodshed which occurred in the Indian territory of the Northern States.

Organized in the east in 1873, the 300 originals reached Fort Dufferin in southern Manitoba and were ready to start for their destination on July 16th, 1874. It was an amazing march. The parade of mounted men, oxen, carts, cattle and machines was often spread out for one and a half to five miles. There were no roads, the streams were swollen and difficult to cross and grasshoppers had stripped the land of vegetation in places. There were accidents, sickness, thunderstorms, and food was so scarce that rations had to be reduced at times.

On August 25th they reached the Cypress Hills. There they found clear, cold water and fodder for

the exhausted animals. After a rest, they journeyed on through Southern Alberta. They found the grass eaten off by the buffalo and the water holes polluted.

In the late fall, they reached the junction of the Bow and Old Man rivers, but they found the land parched and the pasture poor. There was no wood or shelter and winter was coming on. The foothills of the Rockies were in sight and, with great difficulty, they erected Fort Macleod.

The great work of the police was to stamp out the whiskey smuggling, to protect the few white settlers, and to make a law-abiding race out of the wandering bands of Indians.

In carrying out this work, Jerry Potts gave valuable help and advice to the men in scarlet while they were learning the ways of the country. He was hired by Commissioner French in 1874 and he served the force faithfully until he died in 1896. His mother was a Peigan Indian and his father a Scottish trader. The father was killed in Missouri by a drink-crazed Indian. While dying, he named his assailant and Jerry, then a boy of 17, swore to his mother that he would not rest until he had avenged his father's death. He travelled alone and almost unarmed through the woods and over the prairies. He looked into caves in the hills and searched Indian camps, but his quarry always seemed just to elude him. Jerry, although tired and often hungry, kept doggedly on until he located the hunted man in a Sarcee camp near where Calgary now is located. Jerry accused the man of murdering his father and challenged him to fight to the death. Tomahawks and knives were the weapons and a terrible battle was fought before a whole tribe of Sarcee warriors. From the beginning it was tooth and nail. Each struggled

for a chance to plunge his knife into the body of the other and to scalp his opponent. Many times weapons were raised for the fatal plunge, only to be countered by the adversary. Both were wounded in many places, but it was Jerry who, at last, struck the fatal blow. We of the present day can hardly picture such a fight. No "Marquis of Queensbury" rules, no referee, no gong to end the rounds; only strength, skill, endurance, courage and cruelty—with life as the prize.

For over twenty years this man of small stature, bow legs, wrinkled skin and constant cough served as a guide and interpreter. He had an uncanny sense of direction and seemed to be able to find his way through the great lone land in times of sunshine and of storm. He could speak the language of many tribes and was a matchless diplomat in dealing with the children of the plains. His mortal remains lie in the Union cemetery in Macleod beneath a headstone marked "Interpreter."

Many of the young men of the Mounted never again saw their homes or the scenes of their childhood. They lived dangerously and many died on duty and lie beneath the sod in unmarked graves.

*They need no sculptured monuments  
No canopy of stone  
To blazen to the curious world  
The deeds that they have done.*

*But the prairie flower blows softly  
And the scented rosebud trains  
Its wealth of summer beauty  
O'er the Riders of the Plains.*



### **The Work of the N.W.M.P.**

*Our mission is to plant the rule  
Of British Freedom here,  
Restrain the lawless savage  
And protect the pioneer:  
And 'tis a proud and daring trust  
To hold these vast domains  
With but 300 mounted men  
The Riders of the Plains.*

Early residents of Medicine Hat will remember a woman who made a living by washing clothes, named Negress Molly. She claimed to be the first "white" woman to come to the country. She came in from the South with a trader named "Tincup Joe." They came with what seemed to be a barrel of oil and bags of flour. However, each bag had a large tin of liquor concealed in it and the barrel contained "firewater." They were arrested and taken to Fort Walsh for trial. As it was the first offence, Colonel Macleod said he would be easy. He fined each \$250.00. He confiscated the horses, wagon and cargo and sent each to jail for three months. "Judge," said Tincup Joe, "I'm glad I got you in good humor. If this is letting us down easy, I would like to know what a full dose is."

When the C.P.R. was being built, Chief Piapot and his band camped on the right-of-way and held up the construction gang for awhile. Two of the men in scarlet appeared on the scene and gave the hostile chief and his band 10 minutes to move away. The young braves were mounted and galloped around shooting their guns off and backing their ponies against the police horses. The chief had either to kill the police and face a murder charge or to move off. He moved. This showed the high regard in which the police were held.

### Almighty Voice

Many accounts have been written about this misguided young brave, but none of them is more interesting than that told by the late Inspector Parker of Medicine Hat. He was an officer right on the scene at the time of the tragedies. He could tell a story well, and recalled several details of human interest that are not in the official records.

An Indian will do anything for a sick child, and although strict orders were issued that none of the cattle were to be molested, Almighty Voice killed a heifer to make some beef broth for one of the children in the camp. The police officers may have been harsh, or perhaps they did not act wisely, but for this offence the 20-year-old brave was put in jail at Duck Lake. By tricking the officer on guard he escaped during the very first night. He swam across the icy Saskatchewan River in the darkness, leaving no trail behind. He managed to evade the police, collect supplies and to persuade a young squaw to accompany him on his flight into the wilderness. It was late in October when Sergeant Colebrook and a half-breed scout caught up with the fugitives. The chase led through a little ravine, and when ascending the further bank, Almighty Voice, with the squaw by his side, stopped and threatened to shoot. Colebrook lifted his hand in an appeal for peace, but rode on. Almighty Voice fired. The policeman fell off his horse and was likely dead before he reached the ground. Almighty Voice and the squaw, not touching the crumpled figure in scarlet, fled, but the man-hunt now was on in earnest. There was little that could be done, and for 19 months, although patrols worked day and night, Almighty Voice covered his trail so cleverly that no trace of him was found. He then returned to a camp 20 miles from Duck Lake in a desperate mood. Four police officers and two

civilians were shot before they surrounded the now starving Indian in a little bluff of poplars.

The Superintendent now was in charge and was resolved that no more risks should be taken. During the long night of watching, a Mountie, against orders, lit a match. A bullet whizzed by his head. Indians and settlers from far and near gathered around to witness the closing scene.

A crow flew over and lit on a tree-top of the bluff. The starving Indian shot the bird, then grabbing it he devoured flesh, feathers and all ravenously. His wizened mother, standing on a nearby knoll, raised the death song of her erring son. She praised his skill and courage, and called on him to meet death without fear or shrinking.

When the smoke of the firing lifted they found Almighty Voice lying dead in a pit he had dug with his bare hands. Beside him was the body of Little Salteux. Nearby there was the body of an unidentified Indian. Thus ended the spectacular drama.

In 1879 the first police casualty since the formation of the N.W.M.P. force occurred. Constable Graburn was in charge of police horses in the district now called Graburn Gap, south of Walsh, Alberta.

Starchild, an offensive Indian, persisted in sitting in a small police camp and was thrown out by Graburn. This was much resented and later when the constable failed to report, a search party was sent out. Snow had fallen, but the noted guide, Jerry Potts, led the party to the ravine and, by an accident, showed that he was on the right track. Potts' horse shied and swept away some snow with his hoof. This disclosed some drops of blood to Jerry's sharp eyes. Farther on, a hat was found and, lower in the ravine, the body of the constable was seen beside that of his

saddle horse. Both had been shot. The search party went over the area carefully to reconstruct the crime.

While riding to the post, Graburn had been joined by two Indians. This was deducted because there were tracks made by unshod horses. One of the Indians had fallen behind a little and shot the constable. Then the horse was shot.

Starchild had left for parts unknown by this time, but two years later the Mounted Police learned that he was back on the Blood Reserve. Sergeant Patterson and Jerry Potts were sent to bring him in. As they approached his tent, the flaps were opened and Starchild stood at the opening with a levelled rifle. One of the oldest ruses on record worked. The officer looked beyond Starchild and shouted: "Collar him from behind." As the Indian turned to look, they got the drop on him and he was taken for trial. He was acquitted by a jury of newly-arrived settlers who feared what the Indians might do if there were a hanging.

The district has been called "Graburn" and a cairn has been erected on the side of the ravine as a memorial to the young officer who lost his life while on duty with the Force.

The police often went far beyond what might be regarded as their duty. They were like the knights of old in that they gave help wherever it was needed. They fought prairie fires, provided food for the starving, controlled epidemics and helped the sick. When cattle ranches were established, they prosecuted rustlers. The Stock Growers' Association passed resolutions expressing appreciation of their work. In 1905, King Edward VII showed his appreciation of their service to the Empire by conferring upon them the coveted honour of being styled the Royal North-West Mounted Police.

## *Historic Sites*

### **Calgary**

In Central Park a cairn has been erected to commemorate the arrival of the N.W.M.P. in 1875.

The "Originals" numbered about 300 and were divided into six Troops. This small Force undertook the task of driving out the whiskey smugglers, controlling the roving bands of Indians and establishing law and order in the great, lone land. Rude forts were constructed at strategic points. Fort Saskatchewan was founded from which "A" Troop could police what is now the Edmonton Area. "B" Troop was located at Fort Walsh and "C" Troop at Fort Macleod made its presence apparent.

In order to serve the unprotected stretch of 400 miles between Fort Macleod and the fort at Edmonton, "F" Troop was ordered to the Bow River. A fort was built on the green banks of that mountain stream. Colonel Irvine suggested the name "Calgary" which he said in Scotch means "Clear running water." It probably reminded him also of the name of the far-away town of his birth. For a time, this fort in the angle between the Bow and the Elbow was called "Fort Brisbois". The officer with that name wished it to go down in history like the names of the officers, Walsh, Irvine and Macleod, but the Minister favored the word "Calgary".

### **Cluny**

A memorial to Crowfoot is erected at this point.



### Fort Macleod

The first police fort was built on an island on the Oldman River and was named "Fort Macelod". The circumstances at the time of the construction are described elsewhere in this book. The inscription on the cairn reads:

*"To commemorate the arrival in October 1874 after an arduous march of 1,000 miles of the North West Mounted Police and the building of this fort named after the Commanding Officer Colonel J. F. Macleod. Their coming brought law and order into a wild and lawless country and laid the foundation of those social conditions which later made possible the settlement of the country and the birth of cities, towns, villages and peaceful farms."*

### Fort Walsh

Fort Walsh was built in the Cypress Hills in 1875. It was a well planned and well constructed fort in the valley of Battle Creek.

The T. C. Powers Company and the I. G. Baker Company had stores there and about 35 other houses and stables soon appeared. There were about 500 Cree Indians living in the immediate district. It was the centre of police activity until the C.P.R. was built through Maple Creek and Medicine Hat in 1883. After the Custer Massacre in 1877, about 5,000 Sioux Indians under Chief Sitting Bull and sub chiefs, Spotted Eagle and Sweet Bird came to the Cypress Hills near Fort Walsh. They stayed 4 years and were a great responsibility. They were often around the fort begging or peeking in windows or taking anything that was loose. They were always hungry.

One night a buffalo cow was killed, dressed and broiled by the Indians. They sat all night around the fire singing, eating and drinking tea. All the meat was devoured and they had eaten on the average 20 pounds each.

They did not like the Americans. They said they never gave the white people the country; yet, they had been pushed around by the "Long Knives" who had "stained the grass with blood".

When the fort was no longer in use, some of the buildings were burned and others just gradually disappeared.

Recently the fort has been rebuilt and, if you visit the valley today, you can see almost an exact replica of the original fort. Low buildings are built inside the square on the four sides. In the centre are guns, carts and relics of the past. The Commissioner's quarters just to the left of the Main Gate contain mounted buffalo heads, horns of deer and good pictures of scenes recalling events of bygone days. There are men's quarters, store rooms, shops and stables as it is now a Remount Station.

An ancient cemetery lies by the side of the trail just north of the fort. What a tragic history is there recorded! The little marble slabs tell of the young men who met death in the early bloom of their noble manhood.

There lies the body of Graburn who was the first of the police to meet death at the hands of a treacherous Indian. Others—young in years—met death by smallpox, typhoid and by accidents. One stone is erected to the memory of Capt. Clarke, a nephew of Sir John A. and Lady Macdonald.

There is something so sad and solemn about the very atmosphere of this hallowed spot that one cannot view it without emotion. These young men did not die in vain. They and their fellow-officers established law and order in a land where thousands have since made homes and lived in peace and safety.

### **Fort Chesterfield**

The history of many of the stirring events that took place in and around this fort has never been written. The fort was located near the junction of the Red Deer River with the South Saskatchewan where Empress now stands. It is known that battles were fought there and that many who were killed or died of wounds will lie forever in unmarked graves. Those who lived there in the days of long ago were never free of the danger of Indian attacks with all that involved in the way of torture and cruelty. The following is from the record:

In 1800 Peter Fidler of the Hudson's Bay Company built a fort there hoping the Blackfeet, the Bloods and even the Missouri Indians would come there with their valuable furs.

John MacDonald of Garth, a fearless man, was in charge of the rival North West Company at the time. He had been born in the Highlands of Scotland in 1774 and claimed descent from "The Lord of the Isles". He and his men had come up the South Saskatchewan in boats and they built a rival Trading Post at this point.

This place was a favourite meeting ground for all the Indians of the plains but it never was a profitable trading point.

The Indians at this time were well fed and thought more of tribal warfare and horse stealing than in gathering furs.

At one time there were more than 100 teepees on the flat. MacDonald gave the Chiefs buffalo and antelope steaks seasoned with salt. They appreciated this but when he gave them tea to drink they indicated that they would rather have rum.

During that winter every war party of the prairies seemed to gather where Empress now stands. There were bands from the foothills and even from the banks of the Missouri.

One day MacDonald saw a rider coming to the fort at full speed. He was superbly mounted and dressed in a suit of richly-ornamented deer skin. He was a handsome man and a skillful rider. He dropped lightly from his horse and said "I am from the Missouri Indians. We are at war with the Blackfeet who surround you and are your friends." MacDonald smoked a pipe with him and explained that his Company had nothing to do with the quarrel. The Indian at once remounted and galloped away on his fiery steed. Next day a band from the south attacked the Blackfeet. The battle raged all afternoon but the powerful warriors of the native tribe surrounded and captured the enemies from the south. Many were killed or wounded but some of the Missouri band escaped.

At another time the Hudson's Bay Fort was raided and the only survivor saved his life by escaping in the night to the North West Fort.

Trade was at a standstill and MacDonald decided to leave the place. If the Indians knew that he had a supply of tobacco, rum and ammunition, his

fort would have been mobbed. He took the advice of a resourceful trader. Within the stockade walls he built a huge kite. One clear night he flew it. The lovely colored, bird-like structure shimmered in the sky. The Indians were amazed. They came out of their tents and watched spellbound till the kite disappeared in the breeze. What medicine was this?

MacDonald told the Chiefs that the great "Master of Life" had sent this sight to warn them to leave their camping grounds for three days. While they were gone, the Company men departed with their supplies. This was in 1805. Trade had not been good and the men could not go far outside of the fort on account of the ever-present danger of Indian attacks.

### **Fort Standoff**

This fort was built by American traders near Lethbridge and named in honour of "standing off" an officer who had no jurisdiction in Canada.

A cairn has been erected here to the memory of a great Indian Chief "Red Crow". During his reign as Chief of the Blood Indians he was famed far and wide as a warrior, diplomat and orator. He led many war parties against the enemies of this historic tribe and was very active during his long reign from 1870 to 1900.

Although a man of war, he was the first to recognize that with the disappearance of the buffalo the Indians would need to settle on the land to produce food instead of roaming from place to place as hunters.

The Bloods were a powerful tribe and during the Riel Rebellion the rebelling Crees sent runners to

ask their help. "Red Crow" refused to hear their words and hurled their peace offerings of tobacco into the fire. Before this great outstanding leader died in 1900 he established a name by being the first to build a house, the first to use oxen in farm work and his wives were the first to bake bread.

He was able to say that he had never been struck by an enemy with bullet, arrow, axe, spear or knife. This was a great record for a warrior who had killed many enemies and raided their camps from Yellowstone Park to the Red Deer River.

In 1822, after the union of the two great trading companies, a more substantial fort was built but within a year the enmity of the Indians and their repeated attempts to destroy the white men resulted in the locality being permanently abandoned.

### **Fort Whoop-up**

This fort was built in 1869 by two Americans named Healy and Hamilton. It was strongly constructed by W. S. Gladstone and had a stockade, watch tower, loopholes, ramparts and wide gates. It was built at the junction of the St. Marys and Old Man Rivers.

The post soon became the centre of trading activities in Southern Alberta. Although it was named Fort Hamilton, it soon was known by the nickname of "Ft. Whoop-up". A Mr. Wye, when returning to Fort Benton, said "Don't let the Indians whoop you up", meaning don't let them "round you up". The fort was built at the cost of \$25,000 and was deserted in 1874 with the exception of one trader—Dave Akers—who later used the interior as a garden.



**Fort Kipp** was built by two American traders—Joe Kipp and Charles Thomas. The U.S.A. authorities were trying to halt the illicit activities of the traders but these two men succeeded in crossing the border and building log houses on three sides of a square.

### **Fort Slide-out**

This was little more than a group of trading shacks between Fort Kipp and Standoff.

When a man was killed at the post, the remaining men buried the body and decided to “slide out” thus giving the name to the post.

### **Conrad's Post or Robber's Roost**

This post was 3 miles from Fort Kipp and was burned to the ground by Indians.

### **Rundle Memorial**

This was erected by the United Church members in Banff, in 1941.

Reverend Rundle was the first Wesleyan Missionary to visit what is now Alberta. Like other missionaries, he was devoted to the cultural and religious development. He was much loved by the children of nature for his unselfish efforts and when he departed they said of him:

“Poor he came among us,  
Poor he went away leaving us rich.”

Although often in ill health he travelled widely by horse and by foot. He really made an impression on the Indians and his successors many years later found the people he had worked among holding religious services and singing Christian hymns.

## *Police Officers*

**Col. J. F. Macleod**

Jubilee year would seem to be a fitting time to recall something of the great record of that gallant officer, Col. Macleod, who had done so much to establish law and order in Western Canada and had received so little in return.

After the North-West Territory was turned over to Canada from the Hudson's Bay Company in 1869, Captain Butler and Col. Robertson Ross were sent West to spy out the land. They reported that a corps of Mounted Rifles stationed at various points in the West would curb the wild Indian Bands, drive out the whiskey smugglers and protect the pioneer settlers.

There was delay, but after the Cypress Hills Massacre about 150 men and officers were despatched to the West. They made their way from Lake Superior along the Dawson route with 47 portages and spent the winter of 1873 in Lower Fort Garry. This was a period of intensive training and the young men from the east who had looked forward to romance and adventure had little time for themselves. All day long they were under orders. Dapper Griesbach had no sooner put them through the foot drill than they were turned over to Col. Macleod for rifle practice and then they were under the vigorous Major Walsh. The riding and other drills lasted from 6 a.m. till dark in the bitterly cold weather.

In the spring of 1874 the 3 companies went 80 miles south to Fort Dufferin where they met 3

fresh divisions who had come by train through the U.S.A. Then followed that amazing march from Emerson to the Foothills of the Rockies. There were no trails, vegetation was in places destroyed by grasshoppers and fires, food was scarce, there were accidents, the horses became exhausted and died and, in places, the water was as black as ink.

In the darkest days, Col. Macleod was sent south to seek pemmican while the rest pushed thirstily on. They rested at an old Indian Camp and became infested with vermin. A few days later Macleod returned with 2 tons of pemmican and the sick horses and sick men were left at Cripple Camp.

Commissioner French and Col. MacLeod visited Benton during the summer. While there, they engaged Jerry Potts who served the Force so well for 22 years. After the supplies were secured and the half-breeds separated with difficulty from the saloons, the Commissioner left for the East. He said "goodbye" to Macleod at the edge of the town and these two officers who had been through so much together never saw each other again.

Major Macleod was at this time at the height of his noble manhood. He was 38. He was 6 feet tall. He had not an ounce of superfluous flesh and his figure was one the soldiers admired. Guided by Jerry Potts to a sheltered lowland of the Old Man River, he built Fort Macleod. The difficulties were great. He ordered that not a log was to be laid for the men's quarters until there were shelters for the horses and until the sick men were housed.

Fort Macleod was a central point for N.W.M.P. activity. Curious Indians would prowl around the fort. Delegations would come making long speeches.

Arrests would be made and trials held. Macleod was always fair and just. He won the confidence and respect of all and his outstanding services did much to prevent the bloodshed, the plunder, the malpractice and corruption that cost the U.S.A. Government so many millions in the Northern States of the Union.

On one occasion word came of murders in the Sweet Grass Hills. With Jerry Potts as guide and three officers, Macleod started out into the mountainous waste. They were soon in a fierce blizzard and if they had not reached a cut bank and cut a cave in it with their knives, they would have perished in the saddles. For 72 hours they huddled miserably in that cave. They were benumbed with cold and took turns holding the horses to prevent them from drifting. Const. Ryan said repeatedly: "You fellows go on, I cannot make it." However, they helped him and, after struggling along all day, they reached the river Potts had been aiming for.

In 1876 life at Fort Macleod took on some refinement. There were two stores, some social life and a lady came to live there. She was the bride of Col. Macleod. The Colonel resigned from the Force to become a Magistrate but in 6 months was back as Commissioner, to the great delight of the officers who had served with him so faithfully. In his new office he played a great part in getting the Indian Tribes to agree to the various Treaties by which the Western lands were transferred to Canada and the Indians were given Reserves and many other benefits.

In 1880 a big man was required to represent the Majesty of the British Law. The one outstanding man who had the confidence of all was Col. Macleod, so he again said "farewell" to the Force and became a stipendiary magistrate. There was no popular

demonstration, no procession, no crowds to mark the event. He had made a great contribution but his passing from the force seemed to pass unnoticed. He simply took off his uniform of scarlet and gold and put on the judicial cloth.

### Irvine

This town was named after Commissioner Irvine of the N.W.M.P.

In the hectic days following the Riel Rebellion, Lower Fort Garry situated about 20 miles north of Winnipeg was a military post and Major Irvine was in charge.

In 1873 the Cypress Hills Massacre took place. This gruesome tragedy aroused the people of the east and 300 young men were sent out to establish law and order. These were the Originals of that gallant Force—The N.W.M.P.

Major Irvine was sent out as a Superintendent of Police and given the special duty of bringing to justice the Cypress Hills murderers. This quiet, clear-eyed man with clear-cut features scouted for years, endured many hardships, faced many dangers and finally did bring some of the men to trial. The evidence was conflicting and the accused were acquitted.

Following the Custer Massacre in 1876, some 3,000 Sioux Indians came to the Cypress Hill area. As the buffalo were disappearing, these unwanted Indians created a real problem for the police.

In 1877, Assistant Commissioner Irvine and five officers went to visit the newly-arrived Sioux. They were camped in about 500 lodges. As the men in

scarlet entered the huge camping area, they were surrounded by hundreds of the men, women and children. They were directed to a tent where the Chief sat, surrounded by a number of men of immense size. This was the great Sitting Bull. The pipe of peace was passed around. It was noted that the sub-chiefs had many scalps at their belts from the ill-fated Custer Army. Commissioner Irvine promised the strangers that they would be protected if they behaved.

In the Northern States, the Indians seemed to be always on the warpath. There was much bloodshed and the settlers were never safe. The kindly, but firm attitude of the Police Officers and their Supreme Commander, Commissioner Irvine, prevented this in Alberta.

On March 31st, 1886, this officer whose career was so colorful, resigned from the Force. In bidding goodbye to his old comrades of the Mounted, he expressed the hope that they would have success and happiness in the future and that police duties would always be honorably performed.

### **Inspector Walsh**

J. M. Walsh was the principal recruiting officer of the N.W.M.P. He was a tall, athletic, wiry figure, always faultlessly dressed. He served the Force well and was known as the man who subdued "Sitting Bull".

In 1875 it was decided to construct a Fort in the Cypress Hills, which was a centre of lawlessness. Inspector Walsh was detailed for the work.

The Indians were surprised to see the long wagon train and the outriders in uniform toiling slowly



across the prairie. They were much more surprised to see later, the square stockade of Fort Walsh erected with bastions on the four corners and a tall staff from which floated the British Flag.

The Indians recognized the friendship of the police. On one occasion the Inspector rode into a Camp of Sioux Indians wearing a dark blue overcoat. He was met with levelled rifles and angry faces. An officer near, opened his coat showing the scarlet uniform. At once the rifles were lowered as the friends were recognized.

He warned the Sioux that the Queen's laws must be obeyed. On more than one occasion action was needed to impress this fact. An Indian was accused of beating his attractive wife to death. When the body was found, the Police charged him with murder. He was hiding in a Cree Camp 30 miles from the Fort. Inspector Walsh, with only five men, rode into the Camp and arrested the man in spite of the threatening guns. He lived up to the highest traditions of the Force and made a great contribution. As the pay was poor when he retired in 1883, he entered the coal business in Winnipeg to support himself in his declining years.

### J. H. G. Bray

Mr. Bray served in the North West Mounted Police long and faithfully. He was honoured by being promoted to positions of trust and carried out many difficult and dangerous assignments.

In 1874, after an amazing march lasting five months, the worn and weary men in scarlet reached the foothills and built Fort MacLeod. In the spring of 1875 Major Bray, with "B" Division under command of Major Walsh, was sent to the Cypress Hills

to do police work and to build a fort. It was called Fort Walsh and was built in the valley of Battle Creek, and was the centre of police activity until the C.P.R. line was built through to Medicine Hat in 1883. It was in a strategic point to control the whiskey traders and the lawless Indian bands. On one occasion he and Major Walsh with a small party of men went for some horses away south to the Missouri River district. It had been raining for days. There was mud everywhere and swollen streams to ford. They were tired, soaking wet and almost covered with mud when they reached a ranch about 10 miles from the trading post. From this ranch they had the novel experience of seeing an immense herd of buffalo swimming the swollen river. The river was about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile wide at that point and the buffalo were coming pell mell over a ten or twelve foot cut bank. Those behind were crowding those in front into the deep water and the bellowing could be heard for miles. The river was one mass of black heads and horns; many were drowned by others climbing onto their backs and indeed it was a scene never to be forgotten. Many were mired in the deep mud and perished there. Farther down the river buffalo bodies were floating in the muddy waters. The rancher said they had been passing for days on their way from the Yellowstone area to the pasture land in the North.

One winter night Major Bray's party camped about 14 miles from Fort Macleod. It was cold and snow was falling. In the morning there was dampness in the air of the tent and, on looking out, the police party saw they were in the middle of a lake. They had camped in a depression on the prairie and the warm Chinook winds had melted the snow all around the tent.

When Constable Graburn was shot, Col. Macleod asked Mr. Bray, as sheriff, to summon a jury. There

were only a few ranchers in the country and they lived many miles apart. However, in spite of the winter storms, a jury was sworn in and "Star Child" was tried and acquitted on the charge of murder.

Major Bray was appointed a "Brand Inspector" and spent his declining years in Medicine Hat. Before coming to Canada, he had been in the body-guard of the Prince of Wales—the son of Queen Victoria. He was proud of the occasional letter he received from the Prince. He lived an active life full of excitement and adventure. He was a Britisher to the hilt and was always able to tell interesting stories of his experiences in the days when he wore the uniform of Scarlet and Gold.

### Edward McKay

The history of Southern Alberta would not be complete without some reference to an outstanding pioneer—Edward McKay.

He was a brother of a Hudson's Bay Company factor, the father of Mrs. J. H. G. Bray and the grandfather of such highly-regarded citizens of Medicine Hat as Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Crockford, Mrs. Finney and the late Harry and Reginald Bray.

In 1872 he established a post in the Cypress Hills and built houses for his two married sons, his hired man and himself. This group turned the first sod in the area and cultivated a garden. They traded with the Indians and imported their supplies from Fort Benton in the Northern States.

Mr. McKay tells of at least one hanging by a hastily-organized Vigilance Committee as the result of three desperadoes stealing 40 of his horses. The other two escaped but were later killed in a gun feud across the line.

## THE SHORT GRASS AREA

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At the time there was a Vigilantes Committee across the border of which Theodore Roosevelt was a member. This fiery rancher who afterwards became President of the U.S.A. wanted to declare open warfare on all outlaws and horse thieves. The advice of more experienced men prevailed but the records show that from 19 to 75 cattle thieves were hanged by the organization.

Major Walsh and his detachment of the N.W.M.P. happened, by accident, to call on the McKay establishment and there, in 1875, they built Fort Walsh to watch the international line.

When the Sioux Indians under Sitting Bull came to Canada, Fort Walsh became the centre of police activity. The work done at this lonely outpost contributed much to the establishing of law and order in those turbulent times.

The I. G. Baker Company put in a big store at Fort Walsh and the competition was too strong for the smaller trader. McKay closed his trading post. He did, however, secure a contract to supply buffalo meat, butter, milk and cheese to the police and secured the contract to carry the mail from Benton to Fort Walsh.

He also kept a hand in the Indian Trade and one of his sons was among the independent traders at Blackfoot Crossing at the colorful signing of Treaty No. 7, in 1877.

Another son became a prominent lawyer and magistrate. During the recent World Wars, practically all of his great-grandsons carried on the family tradition by enlisting for overseas service.

### Hudson Bay Posts

There was little in the way of social life but the New Year was always celebrated by a glorious festival at the Trading Posts. The day was given over to hand shaking, kissing and sport. The sport often included fist fights resulting in black eyes. Few of the women thought of putting out their hands to shake but they held out their cheeks to be kissed in the old French fashion.

In the evening the Chief Factor gave a dance in the big house and the belle of the ball would be some Blackfoot woman. She would have a splendid figure, be tall and fair and likely be the daughter of some unfortunate white woman captured and kept by the Indian Tribe. Mr. Moberly recalls that quite a number of the women who came to the trading posts in those days had no sign of having a drop of Indian blood. Their hair was light, their eyes were blue and except for sunburn they were as fair as any white woman. For this there was an explanation. When the Indians raided an immigrant covered wagon group on the American side they killed all the grown people and boys but preserved the girls who grew up as perfect Indians and then rarely could they be persuaded to leave their dusky companions.

In those days of long ago the traveller had to be resourceful to survive. A Hudson Bay trader was going along one night with a load of furs when he discovered that he was encircled by a pack of wolves. He had no weapon except his pocket knife. He was close to a river so he cut a club and as he did so seven wolves trotted out on the ice in front of him. With a loud yell he rushed at them swinging his weapon. They did not expect an attack so they rushed off and contented themselves with howling along the bank.

The traders and missionaries in those days lived lives of adventure and danger but they played their parts well and the records they left should not go to the limbo of forgotten things.

### Indian Outrages

Cal Steele reports that before the Northwest Mounted Police came into the West there was constant inter-tribal warfare in the area between Moose Jaw and the foothills of the Rockies. There were many massacres and outrages of the most dreadful description.

At one time Chief Piapot and a large number of Cree and Assinaboine Indians went into the Black-foot country to hunt buffalo. When they were camped on the banks of the Bow River Piapot sent his scouts up the river where a party of old Peigan men with women and children were in tents. All these helpless people were put to death except one boy of 13 who took to the woods and reached Fort Kipp.

Being warned by this boy the Peigan warriors persuaded Jerry Potts to take command as their War Chief. The very next morning Potts took Piapot's camp by surprise and drove all the buffalo hunters out of the Blackfoot country. Mr. Harris, a merchant at Fort Kipp, and another man followed Potts out of curiosity and saw the whole battle. The Crees fled from their camp in disorder and while fording the river suffered severely from the bullets of the rifles of Potts' warriors. Four hundred dead were counted. Potts himself was knocked senseless by a stone in the hands of a Cree squaw. He recovered and later acted as a remarkable interpreter, scout and guide.

Even the Hudson Bay posts that were not well guarded were attacked. The Indians burned a fort



on the Bow River and also Fort Chesterfield. This historic fort was built below the confluence of the South Saskatchewan and the Red Deer Rivers at a cost of \$40,000.

When "firewater" was consumed the cruelty of the natives was often beyond description.

In 1870 a whole party of Blackfeet Indians on the south side of the Saskatchewan were slaughtered by a band of Crees.

Murders were committed and the perpetrators walked around openly in daytime without fear of arrest.

Scalping and horse stealing were virtues and the Indian with the most scalps and the greatest number of stolen horses was the envy and admiration of the camp.

When the "originals" of the N.W.M.P. came these savage practices soon stopped. Settlers came in and the Indians became docile and more law abiding. They were very eager to see the inside of the white people's homes. They would peer through the windows. If the doors were open they would walk in and sit on the floor and wait for food.

### **The First Trial**

Col. Mcleod learned that a Negro trader named Bond had given an Indian named Three Bulls two gallons of whiskey for two horses. The next day, ten policemen with Jerry Potts as a guide, rode out of Fort Mcleod and overtook the Negro, four white men, sixteen horses and two heavily-loaded wagons.

"Halt in the name of the Queen" the officer shouted. The traders were heavily armed but were outnumbered and obeyed. When the wagons were searched, several cases of alcohol, five rifles, five revolvers and one hundred and sixteen buffalo robes were found.

The five men were charged with possession of liquor and were found guilty with Comm. Mcleod and the Police Inspectors sitting on the Bench. The two principals and Bond were fined \$200 each and the two hired teamsters \$50 each. The whiskey was poured out on the snow and the buffalo robes were confiscated.

The next day a man named Weatherwax from Fort Benton paid the fines of the four white men but refused to pay for Bond.

The Negro was thus forced to stay at the Post to serve out a jail sentence. A second charge was laid against him for selling liquor to an Indian.

Colonel Mcleod was anxious to convict him and arranged for Three Bulls to come to give evidence. The Indian agreed to come but, instead of keeping his promise, he and his outfit moved 12 miles away on a buffalo hunt.

When he returned, his evidence was not needed. The police had no jail to keep Bond in and one night he broke away from the sentry and disappeared in the darkness. The sentry fired but missed. Men searched all night but found no sign of him.

Accounts of the final outcome vary but several men reported the finding of the Negro's frozen body the following spring.

Raids on whiskey traders were generally successful and often exciting. The men in scarlet and gold gained respect because of their fair dealing and courage.

*"We'd find each face was beautiful,  
However dull it seems,  
If looking past the grim outside  
We'd see the wistful dreams."*

### A Cree Legend

According to the stories told in this ancient tribe, the "Creator" was a superman who could do anything. He made the sun, the moon and the stars. He made the earth and caused the great flood with the tears of his sorrow. A cleft in the rock was his resting place and hills and valleys on the earth's surface were caused by his dancing with his eyes closed.

Bewildering stories could be told about him for days and days. These were handed down from generation to generation and were of absorbing interest when told around the camp fires.

Once the "Creator" came to a split tree. He took two of the sharp splinters to use as swords. A bear came to attack him. He thrust one sword into the bear and it broke. He used the other sword and it also broke. The bear then chased him and he ran around a bunch of willows. As he ran, he saw the point of a deer's horn sticking out of the ground. Each time he ran around the bush he kicked at the horn until he had loosened it. He picked it up, put it to his forehead, whirled about, faced the bear and shouted "Pouf Pouf". The bear ran away. This story lacks a dramatic point but, when well told, is relished by the Indians with great gusto.

At another stage he fell in love with two Indian maidens. As Indians had many wives in those days, he wanted to marry both but did not think he was good-looking enough. He went to an old witch and asked to have his face made long and narrow. This was done and he went to a nearby pool to look at himself. He did not like his appearance, so back he went to have a broad, round face constructed. Still he was not pleased, so he went back to the "plastic surgeon". "What do you want?" she said. "I do not seem to be able to please you." "Make me look the way you think best, Mother", he said. She fixed him up into a fine-looking man and soon the courtship ended in happy mating.

The following is rather a mystery because it was told long before a white man was seen by Indians:

Once there was a great flood and this Superman got on a raft with all the animals he could secure. When the raft had been floating he sent a beaver overboard to see if he could find land. The beaver returned and then he sent a muskrat. The muskrat returned with a piece of mud in his claws. The man rolled the fragment around in his hands and then blew on it until became bigger and bigger. It was finally so big that all landed on it. The wolverine was sent to run around the earth. He returned in a week and said: "The earth is too small." The man blew harder and harder and it took the wolverine 20 days to make the next round trip. He kept blowing and blowing and the wolverine did not return from the third trip and that is how the world was made.

The Indians have left us the largest collection of myths and legends possessed by any nation.

### Cow Thief Lou

In the days of the open range in Southern Alberta most ranchers were noted for their hospitality and their word was their bond. The big ranchers leased thousands of acres of land for as low as 2 cents per acre. Because of the vastness of these holdings it was impossible to fence them and cattle were allowed to stray at will. It was out of the question to brand all the cattle and rustling made a few dishonest squatters wealthy for a time.

White men from the south were the chief transgressors but some of the wily Indians who had been used to slaughtering buffalo soon learned the bad business.

A noted police officer J. E. Nicholson recalls that Lou was a get-rich-quick stockman. He moved into Happy Valley with 25 head and in less than 4 years had 400 head. His herd grew rapidly while other ranchers were losing cattle constantly and demanded that something be done. Two stock detectives after spending many nights out under the stars finally discovered evidence. They saw Lou and his gang slaughter cattle not his own and hide the heads and hides in swamps and in old wells. When the rustlers had gone they dug up these hides and examined the brands. The time for action came when a rancher Harry Streeter reported the loss of a favourite cow. The hide of this cow was found at Lou's place and a charge was laid against him.

Mr. R. B. Bennett represented the Crown at the trial. Two former employees of the accused swore that they had seen Lou skinning the cow in question and the police gave evidence of finding the hide with the Streeter brand.

A Mrs. Irving who had been a cook at the ranch was the star witness for the defence. She swore that the cow which the Crown witnesses had seen Lou skinning was not the cow in question. Mr. Bennett questioned her closely and she contradicted herself so often that he finally asked the Judge to charge her with perjury. Lou was sentenced to 18 months in jail and fined \$1,000. The case created great interest and was one of the most celebrated district court cases ever heard in Alberta. A local bard is guilty of the following:

*"Lou's courage did quickly wene  
when he saw visions of the pen.  
This is the end of the rustler's tale,  
His present address is Lethbridge jail  
Where for another year and a half  
He'll bother neither cow or calf."*

### **Lady Macdonald**

In the little graveyard at Fort Walsh stands a tombstone marking the last resting place of Captain Clarke of the Mounted. He was a nephew of Sir John A. and Lady Macdonald and he died of typhoid at the fort in 1880.

Three years later the C.P.R. was built to Medicine Hat and Fort Walsh was abandoned. The Force was split into two divisions, one located at Maple Creek and one at Medicine Hat.

Although not in the official records, there is a story connected with the headstone that is of some human interest. The Maple Creek detachment received the stone early in the winter, with the name of Captain Clarke neatly inscribed on it and with the request that it be placed on the grave and the grave



kept in order. The tombstone was put out in the coal shed of the barracks. Month after month went by and the opportunity to take it to Fort Walsh never seemed to come. Suddenly, late in August a telegram was received saying Lady Macdonald was coming in three days to visit the cemetery. The message came from the Comptroller of Police, who was also Sir John's secretary, and requested the O.C. to be ready to take Lady Macdonald to the Cypress Hills and bring her back in time to catch a train that would carry her to Winnipeg to meet Sir John the following day.

There was action within one minute after the telegram was read, although it was 10 o'clock at night. Constable Ike Forbes was asked to get his party ready—six men, shovels, a scythe, hoes, etc.—and to start at daybreak for the hills to set up the headstone and get the grave in order. Ike did a good job and was complimented by the O.C. and also by Lady Macdonald on the excellent condition in which the grave had been kept.

The trip back to Maple Creek was a memorable one. The police did not want to have the lady and her party miss the train and so they kept speeding. The old four-horse coach hit the bumps pretty hard as they dashed along over the rough prairie. They were doing fairly well until one of the horses dropped dead just where the Lawrence ranch now is located. The outriders hastened to have the train held for the party. The driver freed his three living horses from the dead one, started up again, and caught the train.

Lady Macdonald, many years later, told an Ottawa Women's Club about her adventure on the trip, and paid one of the finest tributes to the Mounties ever given.

### The Escape

There is a family living near Maple Creek well known in the whole district by the name of Parsonage. They have made a great contribution to the country and have many interesting tales to tell of the days when the West was young.

A friend of theirs named McPherson and four other teamsters were captured by the Sioux Indians and taken into the hostile camp. This fierce Indian tribe was on the warpath at the time, fighting the American cavalry. One by one these teamsters were put to death by torture. McPherson was the last and he put up a strong argument to the effect that he was not an American but a Hudson Bay man. At length he was released and told if he were a Hudson Bay man he could go back to the Hudson Bay. He was turned loose stark naked, told to run north and that if he turned to look back he would be shot. For 30 days he worked his way northward, naked, alone, and unarmed. He saved himself from sun scald by picking up old pieces of buffalo hide and made rough moccasins from the same material. He came to a deserted Indian camp and gathered enough horsetail hair to snare gophers which he ate raw. He found some small berries. There was water in the sloughs and streams. Burned in the sun by day and perishing from cold at night, McPherson finally fell in with some white traders close to the present site of Saskatoon.

### Bull Teams

Freight and passengers before 1890 were brought into Southern Alberta by Bull teams. Most of the supplies in those years came from Fort Benton, Montana. This fort was at the end of navigation from the Mississippi River on the Missouri. At that

time there were about 40 houses on the river bank. Ten of the places were saloons and I. G. Baker & Co., and T. C. Power & Brother had warehouses there.

The Bull Team method of transportation was one of the most colorful features of the time. Each team consisted of nine pairs of animals and each animal was yoked with his usual working partner and always on the same side. The drivers called themselves bullwhackers and they could swing the long black snake whip and make it snap with a report like a pistol being fired that could be heard in the ancient solitudes for miles. Six or seven tons could be carried by the two or three wagons behind the team and from 12 to 14 miles could be covered in a day. When crossing streams or going up steep grades, only one wagon would be hauled at a time and powerful locks had to be used when going down steep hills.

Most of the teams were owned by one or other of the rival trading companies and they travelled on the old Whoop-up trail from Fort Benton into Southern Alberta. Many difficulties were met along the trail but the teams nearly always reached their destination, bringing groceries, dry goods, boots and shoes, canned goods and other liquids to the lonely trading posts in Alberta.

In 1890, the career of the Bull teams came to an end by the building of the narrow gauge railway along this route by the Alberta Railway and Coal Co. The Hudson's Bay Company the next year took over the stores of the two historic American Trading Companies.

### Preparing for the Trail

Charles Goodnight was a master cattleman and in his book he describes the Chuckwagon which he

invented. It was used in the roundup for gathering the herds and driving the cattle to market. To start with, a stout wagon was chosen. It was covered with rainproof canvas and there was a box at the rear for storing tin dishes, a Dutch oven, a frying pan, a kettle and a coffee pot. The staple articles of food, e.g., coffee, salt, corn meal, flour, beans, etc., all had their exact place. A folding leg was usually attached to the chuck box lid so it could be used as a table when lowered for action.

The main body of the wagon was packed with bed rolls, slickers and extra clothing and a water barrel with a hood top attached in the front. Beneath the wagon there would be a cowhide sling for transporting dry wood kindling and buffalo chips. In a box below the driver's seat the cook usually kept such tools as axes, hammers and shovels.

On the trail, the chuckwagon was home for the riders. The cook was the housekeeper, the driver and the handy man. He was often referred to as the "old lady" but care was taken not to offend him as he had so many subtle ways of evening a score.

Tales of the Chisholm Trail will be read as long as the history of the Ranching industry survives.

The tending of flocks and herds is the very oldest occupation and, at times, may be dull and monotonous, but trailing of cattle in the North-Western States involved activity and adventure. There was always the danger of accidents and yet this was seldom provided for.

It took days to prepare for long and difficult drives. Each cowboy assigned to make the trip would get his personal gear ready. He was allowed to take a

pair of bed blankets and a few extra clothes in a sack. No extra supplies could be taken in the wagon as there was plenty of rough country to be travelled, creeks and steep-banked rivers to be crossed and brush to break through. Storms and cold weather, stampedes and hostile Indians added to the danger and discomfort of the Trail Drivers.

The clothing of the cowboy has changed very little in the last century. He seldom wore a coat because it hampered free movement. He wore a vest, usually unbuttoned, and thick underclothing. The active cow man was often kicked and thick clothing protected his body from injury to some extent. He wore chaps—not for their appearance—but to protect his legs from the underbrush and from the bites of insects. He wore high heels on his boots to keep his feet from slipping through the stirrups. He wore gloves to protect his palms from being burned by the lariat which he used constantly. He paid good money for a broad hat to protect him from the sun, the rain and the snow. He did not spare expense on a fancy belt and the bandanna was the non-official flag of the range country. A few of its uses were as follows: To protect the back of the neck from the sun; a dust mask; an ear cover in cold weather; a towel; a blindfold for a skitty horse; for tying calf's legs together while branding; a strainer while drinking muddy water; a dish dryer; a hat tie in windy weather; a sling for broken arms; a bandage; an aid in signalling and for hanging horse thieves.

If there were 3,000 cattle in the herd, there would be 16 to 18 riders, a cook in the chuckwagon and a horse wrangler. A trail herd consisted of cattle from various owners and a road brand was often applied by having the cattle move through a chute and the hot iron being lightly applied to each.

*"Ask why the eagle soars in air,  
And builds on high his craggy nest,  
Ask why the fishes swim so deep,  
Then ask me why I love the West."*

General Griesbach tells of a trip he made from Calgary north in a buckboard in 1883. Where Leduc now stands there was an interesting little store. The owner was absent but on the door was a sign "Walk in and help yourself." A price tag was on each article, e.g., a plug of tobacco 25 cts., a can of tomatoes 50 cts. and so on. His father went in, took what was required and left the exact amount the tags called for in the drawer.

The General recalls an event that happened when his father was in charge at Fort Saskatchewan. There was a rough character named Jack Matheson there who had licked nearly every fighting man in the district. He later went to College and came back as an ordained Minister.

One day Mrs. Griesbach was on the verandah and saw the Rev. Jack coming up from the river. She greeted him and asked him to come in for lunch. He replied that he might not have time and that he was now "working for The Master". She did not at the moment catch the meaning and replied "That is all right, bring the master in with you." Later she was much embarrassed by what she called her stupidity.

In those days telling "tall" stories was a favourite pastime.

While on patrol, a police officer called at the shack of one Sam Outerbridge. The door was open and old Sam sat in the dim light with his face buried in



his hands in a state of great dejection. The officer greeted him cheerily. The old fellow just looked up, nodded and again buried his face.

It seemed that old Sam has much attached to his large, yellow dog that he had raised from a puppy. While walking out in the early darkness he had found the dog lying on the pathway. He had patted him and spoke kindly to him but the dog had snarled, showed his teeth and threatened Sam. The old man was amazed and shocked at his attitude. He was mad. He grabbed the dog by the scuff of the neck, booted him and chucked him into the oat house, fastening the door firmly. Sam felt badly—he was filled with remorse and felt he had lost his good friend by his action in a moment of anger.

Just then the dog in question bounced in and gleefully put his paws on old Sam's knees and licked his hands. The officer said "How did he get out of the oat house? You said you locked him in." "I am sure I did", said Sam. They went out to investigate. When the peg that fastened the door was pulled out of its hole, the door burst open and out jumped a Mountain Lion which fled into the darkness pursued by all the dogs.



## *Storytelling*

Much has been written about the adventures and the exciting lives led by those who first came to the West.

The Hudson's Bay Company relinquished its charter in 1869 and until the N.W.M.P. came out in 1874 there was no law enforcement. The thrilling stories that have been told by the originals of the force are found in the records and they give a picture of a way of life that has passed and gone forever. In those days of long ago storytelling was the chief entertainment in ranch homes and around Indian camp fires.

The following is a mild example of one of the stories of mystery and magic.

"A long time ago a man lived by himself. He had lots of meat and many hides and furs. A stranger came to his lodge one day and said 'I am glad I found you because I have often heard of you'. The stranger was given food and a comfortable bed was also prepared for him. He saw a great sack hanging on the lodge pole. He could not sleep because he was so curious about what the sack contained. He quietly reached up, opened the sack and ran out of the lodge with it. He hurried over the rough ground and through the bush until he came to a lake. He started around the lake going as fast as he could over the soft ground. He struggled on and on but the shore of the lake seemed to have no end and at last he sank down quite exhausted. When he wakened the sack was still on the lodge pole and he was in the bed."

In order to get first hand information the "Illustrated Canadian News" sent Mr. Julien to accompany the police on their amazing march westward from Fort Dufferin. He tells of some events that are not in the records. As the caravan moved farther and farther west the prairie seemed to close in upon them. There were great hardships and loneliness and there was monotony and exhaustion. Flocks of vultures would sway above them indicating that some animal along the line had fallen and could rise no more. Dust was blown by the high winds causing cracked lips and sore eyes, and mosquitos and horse flies would come in clouds. Bleached bones could be seen along the trail and Mr. Julien found much to report to his paper about food being in short supply and water being as black as ink.

The journey had some brighter moments for at times there would be singing around the camp fires and among these young men there were many good story tellers. In fact for 50 years wherever there were one or more "Originals" good stories would be told in a very interesting way. At times the Indians would put on a powwow and follow it with an Indian dance. These dances were simple as the men and women would merely hop up and down in tune and slowly move from right to left. The natives were always greatly pleased by the applause. After hours of this the pipe of peace would be passed around and there would be long speeches. There were only about 300 words in some Indian languages and there was a charm and grace about the way the words were used that was fascinating. There was no self-consciousness and the orators used eloquent gestures so that they would be listened to for hours.

The weird loneliness of the wilderness made a great impression on the newspaper man. "This has truly been called the great lone land" he said. "Its

silence and its ancient solitudes are overcoming. It is a real desert, a land of desolation and will remain so until the white man settles on it and turns it into a garden."

### "Crowfoot"

To the Indians, the most famous of all mottoes and expressions attributed to Chief Crowfoot was: "Makakit ki Eyekakimat," which translated is "Be wise and persevere."

The pages of history show that among all people in every age there are men and women of outstanding native ability. In almost every crisis leaders come forward to guide the race in an upward path. The Blackfoot Indian Chief Crowfoot, like Saul of old, stood head and shoulders above his people and, to preserve memories of the heroic deeds and "little remembered acts" of this noble chief, the following records have been assembled:

He was often seen in Southern Alberta in the seventies and eighties. He had a tall, gaunt figure, a clear-cut profile and long, straight, black hair that often hung about his face. He had led his braves in many battles against their enemies of the plains and they, in turn, always paid him the truest loyalty and homage. He is described as being the personification of grace. He made eloquent gestures in his speeches. He condemned the use of firewater and, even when he was weak and dying, he refused egg-nogs because they had brandy in them. In his public addresses to his people, he used illustrations that are most expressive, e.g.,

"They came to protect us," he said of the N.W. M.P., "as the feathers protect the birds from the frosts of winter."

After a trip to Eastern cities he told his young men: "It is useless to rise against the white. They are as plentiful as the flies in summertime."

When the minor chiefs were keen to go on the warpath he said:

"To rise there must be an object. To rebel there must be a wrong done. To do either we must know if it will benefit us."

During the darkest days of World War II, Prime Minister Winston Churchill stirred the very soul of the British nation by saying: "We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing places, we shall fight on the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills and valleys, we shall never surrender."

Crowfoot, who could only mark an "X" for his name, when faced with a similar danger said: Although our enemies be as strong as the sun and as numerous as the stars of Heaven, yet will we defend our lodges."

Chief Crowfoot had faith in the North West Mounted Police officers and they, in turn, had great control over the Indian tribes.

The white forces in the Northern States were not so fortunate. There was constant trouble there, culminating in the shocking Custer massacre that took place about this time just across the border in the Yellowstone district. The Sioux Indians, after this inhuman slaughter, came to the Cypress Hills and settled there under the leadership of Chief Sitting Bull and sub-chiefs Sweet Bird and Spotted Eagle.

Before this terrible event, the Sioux chiefs had sent tobacco to the Blackfoot Indians to be smoked if they would cross the line and help Sitting Bull to fight the Cree Indians and the American people. As they were promised food, horses, blankets, etc., some of the chiefs were in favor of going, but Crowfoot's advice prevailed and the tobacco was sent back. If the Blackfoot—the most warlike of the tribes—had joined the Sioux at that time it is likely that Calgary and Medicine Hat would have been destroyed.

The signing of Treaty No. 7 at Blackfoot Crossing near Gleichen, in 1877, was a colorful event. Thousands of Blackfoot, Bloods, Piegans, Sarcees and Stonies had gathered. Each tribe was allotted a place on the meadow and there they erected their gaudily-painted teepees. Children played and shouted. Dogs barked and howled. There was singing and dancing. Traders opened canvas-covered stores and hawked their wares.

Lieutenant-Governor Laird and Colonel Macleod—now Commissioner of Police—were there with some 80 police officers. All were dressed in their colorful uniforms. There was much bowing and handshaking. The Lieutenant-Governor made a typical Indian agent speech. He said: "The Queen wanted the red men and the white men to be brothers and friends. She wanted more white men to come to the country to raise cattle. The buffalo would soon be gone and the Queen wanted the Indian children to accustom themselves to some other form of livelihood than hunting." There was much delay.

Crowfoot, the Chief of Chiefs, was now at the height of his great career. He was wise, cool and tactful. Food was handed out but he refused to



partake until he had heard the terms of the agreement. He made a long and eloquent speech. He reviewed the history of recent times. He praised the police. He bitterly condemned the whisky smugglers. He made a sincere plea for good treatment for his people and he ended up by saying, "I will be the first to sign and the last to break my bond." The terms were briefly as follows:

All Southern Alberta was surrendered to the Canadian Government.

Reservations of land were set aside so that every family of five Indians would have 640 acres.

The Government gave a lump sum of money amounting to \$12.00 a head, as well as an annuity of \$25.00 for each head chief, \$15.00 for an agreed number of minor chiefs and councillors and \$5.00 for every other Indian of whatever age. The chiefs and councillors were promised a suit of clothes befitting their dignity every three years; also a medal, a flag and a Winchester rifle to commemorate the treaty.

Teachers to instruct the children were to be provided.

Carpenters' tools, seed and stock were also promised for each family on the reserve.

There were difficulties as no one could say how many Indians there were and it was not clear whether they could roam at will or not, but down through the years the Government has provided generously for these wards. The new Indian Bill of 1951 greatly increased the benefits to the Indians.

Crowfoot was ill in 1890. The Government sent doctors to stay at his bedside. Everything humanly possible was done for him. His last words were:

"In a little while Crowfoot will leave you; whither he cannot say. From nothing we come, into nothing we go. What is life? It is a flash of a firefly in a summer night. It is as the breath of a buffalo on a winter day. It is as a little shadow that runs across the grass and is lost in the sunshine."

He thanked the doctor. He expressed gratitude to the Government for all that had been done for his people and himself. He exhorted his people to be law-abiding. He asked that there be no more noise. A profound silence fell over the whole reserve. Not a dog barked. His word was law, even in death.

In 1950, the Southern Alberta Old Timers' Association erected an imposing cairn to his memory. It was dedicated in the presence of a large number of people. The Indians cherish the memory of this great man and regard this cairn and pictures of Crowfoot with great reverence. Let us hope that the record of his words and deeds will be preserved "as long as the sun shines and the rivers run to the seas."

The passing of Crowfoot marked the end of an era. Wandering constantly over the plains in search for game is no longer necessary. The dead ashes of the camp fires have long been scattered by the winds. The trail stamped by Indian war parties has been wiped out by shining roads. Today, the Medicine Man is not called upon to make blood-curdling shouts to drive away the evil spirits. Today, the Indian does not lack food if hunting is poor, but they still have their dreams. Their legends and traditions will still live and be handed down to future generations as a rich heritage.

The Indian population today is close to 150,000 and is increasing by 1% per year. Some are farmers, hunters, trade workers or guides and some have

entered the professions. They all have better food now, better health care and better homes. Each family of five has a section of land on the reservations and some are wealthy.

Today the Indians are loyal to Canada and tribal wars and scalping are only memories.

Although not subject to Conscription, 35% of the men enlisted for recent wars and rendered valuable service, particularly as scouts and snipers.



## *Early Ranch Life*

When the West was young, life was in many communities more free and easy than it is today. It seemed that everybody knew everybody else and knew who could sing the songs and who could tell the stories in the most entertaining way.

Cattle rustlers were not unknown but they had to be very alert and cautious in applying their branding irons to Mavericks if they hoped to escape the vigilance of the Mounted Police and Stock Inspectors.

In most districts there were odd characters. They were odd in appearance and their actions were much talked about—sometimes providing amusement and sometimes much annoyance.

In one locality the notorious character was a light-fingered individual who seemed to get away with everything that was not firmly bolted down. He was called "Whiskey Cox" and he was credited with taking a cooking stove from the Police Barracks at MacLeod. He managed this by carrying it off piece by piece and then asking the officers what they would take for the old wreck of a frame remaining.

### **The Ranching Industry**

*"Oh, give me a home where the buffalo roam  
And the deer and the antelope play,  
Where never is heard a discouraging word  
And the skies are not cloudy all day."*

Ranching is written up as the industry of luxury and romance. In reality, there is much hard work, physical danger and financial risk involved.

Southern Alberta is well suited by nature for a live stock industry. From remote ages, it supported vast herds of buffalo. The native grasses are nutritious and there are streams and sloughs. Owing to the chinook winds, the cold spells of winter do not last long.

Before 1875, ranching was impossible in this district because the Indians were not under any effective control and would not hesitate to slaughter the animals for food. Also, the buffalo bulls would have speedily disposed of any bulls among the newcomers and the cows would have been swept away in the wild herds of bisons.

In 1877, Fred Kanouse turned some 22 head loose on the open prairie and was thus the father of Alberta ranching.

Mansell Brothers had great difficulty on their ranch. Indians got away with some of their stock. Their food supply ran out and the river was so swollen by the spring floods that it could not be forded to get supplies. They went to neighbors but found them also reduced to eating pike three times a day. The brothers were so "touchy" that they would not speak for fear of starting a row. At last, one of them succeeded in borrowing some flour and bacon. He galloped home, and seeing his brother, he shouted "make fire." After a good meal of half-cooked food, they settled down and talked as if they had not met for 20 years.

A cattle drive in 1881 turned out to be disastrous and costly.

The Cochrane Ranching Company purchased 12,000 cattle in Montana and the I. G. Baker Company contracted to deliver them to the ranch west

of Calgary. Thirty cowboys and 300 horses were employed. The weather was cold. As the drive continued, many of the cattle had their hooves worn down to the quick and they were hurried along at such a rapid rate that they soon became exhausted. The record states: "The stock was shoved along at a merciless rate. From morning until night the poor animals were kept on the move and, when night came, they were too tired to feed. Straggling along behind came the weaker animals and the young calves. When younger animals could be whipped along no more, some were placed in wagons, some were left to die on the prairie, some were traded for a pound of butter, a drink of tea or a glass of milk. The loss to the company ran into large figures. The worn and weary stock that survived were forced across the Bow River and delivered to Major Walker and his men who were waiting. Before the stock could recuperate, storms of winter came on and a scant 4,000 cattle remained in the spring.

The company was discouraged and moved the remaining stock to the Macleod area.

In 1880, some system was introduced by the Government. A rancher was allowed to rent up to 100,000 acres at \$10.00 per 1,000 acres as an annual rental. "Squatters' rights" were soon respected and thus started the age-old battle between the open-range ranchers and the homesteaders.

As more and more cattle drifted in from the south, mange was introduced and spread widely in the herds. In 1898, the whole area south of the main line of the C.P.R. was quarantined and about 375,000 cattle were dipped before the disease disappeared.

The cattle from Mexico and Texas did not do well. They were not only savage but ill formed and so thin



that the best pasture did not fit them for export. They excelled only in length of horn and length of wind and the owners were glad to get rid of them. Shorthorn, Polled Angus and Herefords were introduced and finally the white-faced Herefords became the most profitable breed. With the open range and the mixing of cattle, there was rapid deterioration of the standard.

Terrific losses were taken at times on account of storms, disease and market conditions.

Ranching has always been an extremely risky business, but perhaps the most tragic losses were made by the early British investors in the cattle business.

The records show that the winter of 1883 was a long and bitterly cold winter. The losses sustained by those who had cattle on the open range were very severe. In the springtime in many coulees, there were heaps of dead bodies and Indians made wages by skinning the animals for 25 cents each.

In 1883, the Cochrane cattle were moved to the Waterton Lake district. The snow kept falling that year until it was six feet deep in places. There were no chinooks and even the best rustlers among the cattle could not get feed. The cattle finally crowded to the edge of the lakes, browsing the willows to stubs and bawling constantly in their hunger. A loss of the entire herd was threatened.

Frank Strong offered to save the cattle for \$1,000. His offer was accepted and he rounded up about 300 cayuses. He hired a few experienced riders and, without delay, driving the tough ponies before them, they struck out through the deep snow. Urged on

by whip and spur, the hardy little animals foundered for two days, cutting a wide swath in the crusted snow. They then reached the lakes and the imprisoned, starving herds. Strong at once turned his band homeward and they went back at a gallop, reaching the starting point in eight hours. Right behind them came the great herd of bawling steers. They came at a fast trot as they seemed to know that open prairie and food was ahead. In 12 hours, thousands of Cochrane cattle were feeding on the cured grass of the reserve.

As the years went by, the C.P.R. and the Government having much land, began to encourage farmers to settle in Southern Alberta. In 1885, all even-numbered sections of the grazing land were thrown open for homesteads, pre-emptions or for sale. In 1892, notice was given that all leases not providing for homesteading would be cancelled in 1896. This was the "death blow" to the large ranchers. Squatters made a practice of filing near the springs and water holes in order to be bought off by the cattlemen who had to have water. Everywhere the mileage of wire fences grew and the old cattle trails that had been used since the foundation of the industry were closed.

It is true that George Lane and his associates leased large areas and tried to extend their operations, but the majority of ranchers either went out of business or decreased their herds.

In 1904, the Cochrane Ranching Company, the biggest firm in the country, decided to go out of business and 500,000 acres of the best land in the south were bought up by the Mormon Church.

### *The Remittance Men*

Old-timers in Alberta are fond of telling stories about the Remittance Men. To the westerner these were sons of good English families who received money, i.e., remittance from home. They came to different points in Alberta to engage in Ranching, and their strange ways, their misfortunes and their sins of omission and commission were discussed around many camp fires. Most of these men did not fit into the social life of their British homes and were sent to Canada so that their relations would not be embarrassed by their conduct. They came with their leggings, monocles, caps, accents and habits, and proved at times to be a great source of amusement and at times profit to the cowboys and settlers. These boys had money and instead of working they seemed to crave leisure and wild excitement. They tried to paint the towns red as it were. They would drink with anybody, tear up the interior of hotels and waste their money in sinful profusion. The hotel keepers would give them sleeping rooms, food and credit at the bar because they could count on the quarterly dividend from England. Many were scions of good families and they often made pitiful exhibitions of themselves. Some settlers who laughed at them and ridiculed them were not above taking advantage of them by selling them supplies and even farms for ridiculously high prices. A remittance man in High River went through one hundred thousand dollars in a few years and came down to driving a scavenger wagon. As the years went by, the money from home ceased to come, and some became beggars, hotel hangers on, squaw men and some became police officers.

There is something fine about Britishers wherever they are and many of these men adjusted themselves

to the new conditions and used their latent ability and education to become leaders in the community and worthy citizens.

One thing they all did, when World War I started and danger threatened the Isles of Britain, they dropped everything and regardless of costs rushed to the defense of the beloved land of their birth. Many of them never returned. When the test came they proved to be true to the highest traditions of the race.



## *Recent Events*

### **The Building of the C.P.R.**

*"There were giants in those days."*

There was much political turmoil before a charter was granted to the C.P.R. to build across the prairies to the West Coast. The company was finally granted \$25,000,000 and 25,000,000 acres of land fairly suitable for agriculture, with mineral rights.

Even under those terms there was great difficulty in financing. At one time, Mr. Stephen and Sir Donald Smith had to pledge their personal credit to get supplies.

We realize now the debt of gratitude we owe to the Government of that day and to these outstanding C.P.R. officials. In 1882, the C.P.R. grade had reached a point 20 miles west of Maple Creek. In April of the next year the work was resumed and under the impelling influence of Wm. Van Horne rapid progress was made. Five thousand men and 1,700 teams worked incessantly and as many as 20 miles of steel was laid in three days in a record-breaking drive.

The appearance of the great army of men, the camps and the horses impressed the natives of the plains in various ways. One incident is pathetic in a way and made a deep impression on the great railway builder Van Horne, who happened to be at the end of the line. Just as the shades of night were falling he saw a mounted Indian appear on the top of a nearby hill and gaze silently at the grade and the huge construction camp. His bearing was impressive and dignified with his colorful eagle feathers

fluttering in the breeze. Sitting outlined against the fading skyline, he seemed to contemplate at some length this intrusion upon the ancient domain of his fathers. Then without a sign or a word he quietly disappeared with the last rays of the setting sun.

As the construction proceeded through the Blackfoot reserve, resistance was met. Rails put down during the day were torn up at night by the Indians. They had not been notified that the road would go through their reserve and they feared the noise of the Great Iron Horse in their ancient solitudes. They felt that the Treaty of 1877 was being violated and Chief Crowfoot restrained the warriors with difficulty. The situation was tense and Commissioner Irvine warned the department at Ottawa that war with all the bloodshed that would be involved, was imminent.

Father Lacombe, who was then in charge of a parish in Calgary, saved the situation. In language they could understand, he assured the Indians that only a narrow strip of land would be needed and that the tribe would be adequately compensated. Crowfoot backed him up and their counsel prevailed.

Crowfoot was given a perennial pass over the C.P.R. and Father Lacombe received even a greater honor.

The first passenger train to reach Calgary carried the following senior officers: Lord Mount Stephen, Sir Donald A. Smith, R. B. Angus and William Van Horne. Father Lacombe was invited to lunch with them. In recognition of his services, Lord Mount Stephen resigned and for one hour this great missionary was president of the C.P.R. Lord Mount Stephen was the rector of St. Mary's for that hour.



After assuming office, Father Lacombe looked out of a window and remarked: "Poor souls of Calgary, I pity you." He was also given a pass over the C.P.R. for life.

### Development

The first white settlers in the south of the province were U.S.A. adventurers, traders, retired N.W.-M.P., Texas cowboys, ranchers and remittance men. Even before the railway came through there were thriving villages, e.g., Macleod, Pincher Creek and Medicine Hat.

With the coming of the railway the population rapidly increased. There were many British and American immigrants finding homes along the railway. By the year 1900 more than 1,000 Mormons had established homes in Alberta under the British flag. They founded the towns of Cardston, Magrath, Stirling and Raymond. Albertans are proud of these earnest people and the contribution they have made to the wealth of the province. Their settlements are well laid out with beautiful trees and colorful flower gardens. Their churches, homes and schools are well kept. The Cardston Temple and the beet sugar factories show what they have accomplished.

In some districts Russian German immigrants have settled in large numbers. They have been successful as farmers and the interest they take in public affairs shows that they are becoming good Canadian citizens. There are very few French families. Some of the people who have made homes in the area are from Ontario and the Maritime Provinces, but probably the majority have come in from the States. Although the population is mixed there is a good community spirit and a good neighborly feeling is everywhere in evidence.

### Natural Gas

Natural gas was first discovered by the C.P.R. at Alderson about 1890. The town of Medicine Hat decided to drill for gas, although money was scarce. The contractor kept drilling, but the money was about used up and no gas had been found. Feeling was running high and some thought the money was being wasted. The Mayor took the responsibility of telling the contractor to keep on drilling. Early the next morning the Mayor was seen running down the path toward the well with no hat, no coat and braces dangling behind his heels. Others were running also and it seemed to be a thief chase. The driller had reached gas at 1010 feet and as the drill went through the last crust gas came out with a terrific roar. Wells were later drilled at Bow Island and Foremost and gas piped to Calgary.

Gas was used for lighting before electric power was available and is still used for heating. The abundance of gas has resulted in influencing companies to erect greenhouses, potteries and flour mills, and has made Medicine Hat a manufacturing centre. Strangers passing through were often surprised to see gas burning night and day.

### Manyberries Station

Many farmers came into Southern Alberta with high hopes of making a success. When there were many crop failures it was realized that the cattle industry could be revived as there were large areas of abandoned land. In 1925 a Dominion Range Experimental Station was established at Manyberries. The object was to experiment in all lines of ranching practice so that those who observed the results could provide better homes and better living conditions for themselves and their families.

In the area chosen the rainfall in 1927, the wettest year of all, was 25.28 inches. In most years it was much less, averaging 11.3 inches. In was only 6.72 inches in 1931.

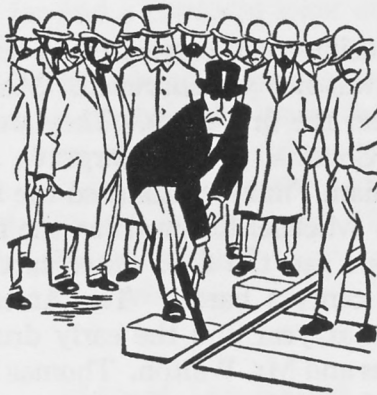
Owing to high winds and intense heat, the rate of evaporation is high, and as the land is rough and rolling much of the moisture runs off.

Information has been published about the following:

**Effect of Over Grazing**

**Nutrimment Value of Grasses**

**Water Conservation**—including construction of dams, dugouts, reservoirs and irrigation for gardens and pastures, also a bookkeeping system for ranchers.



## *The Pioneers*

*"For when the one Great Scorer comes  
To write against your name,  
He writes not what you won or lost  
But how you played the game."*

It may be said that Medicine Hat was born in 1883. It was realized that the main line of the C.P.R. was coming through during that year and these hardy adventurers started the town to be ready for the coming of this great line of communication. Much could be written of these men of vision and those who came after owe much to them for their courage and enterprise. They endured the hardships and laid the foundations so that those who came later could enjoy the comforts which have always been a feature of life in the gas city.

The first businessmen carried on in tents because the townsite was not yet surveyed. Messrs. Tweed and Ewart had the first store. They were followed by William Cousins, James Hargrave and Henry Stewart. William Finlay established the first lumber yard in 1884. Michael Leonard ran the first bakery, and Fred Pope ran the first water cart, delivering water for 25 cents a barrel. The American Hotel was erected that year and the early druggists were Albert Hughes and Mr. Walton. Thomas Hutchinson had the first harness and saddle store and H. Finn had the first butcher store. John Hay established the first blacksmith shop and Wm. Tom was a contractor and builder in 1883. Robert, Jim and R. C. Porter were active in those days, and H. Yuill, coming in 1885, was outstanding during all the years as an employer of labour and as the builder and founder of many industries.

The first bank was "The Merchants" and Ed. Fewings was the manager. Shortly after it started Bill Culley entered, dressed in cowboy attire, including high top boots and a gun. He marched up to the wicket and said, "I want some money." The cashier, perhaps having been reading Wild West stories, thought a holdup was being staged. Help was hurriedly summoned and when the local policeman mounted the steps with a gun in hand and peered cautiously in, the would-be customer was peacefully chewing a cud of tobacco.

The "News" was started in 1886. The early editors were Armour, Halt, J. K. Drinnan, Rev. Gordon and Fred Forster.

M. Grimmet was the first school teacher. There were twenty pupils and the residents voluntarily gave \$2.00 per month toward the expenses. The bachelors later wanted a lady teacher. Applications were called for and a practical joker attached a picture of some actress, taken from a magazine, to each application. The selecting committee had quite a time selecting a teacher and when the chosen lady did arrive, there were some disappointed swains because she did not resemble the picture that had been viewed with the applications. However, from that day to this the schools have maintained a high standard of efficiency.

### **Men of the Range**

The Medicine Hat Ranching Company started one of the first large ranches in Southern Alberta. The original owners were Thomas Tweed, W. F. Findlay, J. Ewart and Ezra Pearson. Mr. Pearson was the first manager and he was well known in the district because he had been the driver of the mail coach for three years between Medicine Hat and Lethbridge.

This ranch was started in 1886 and is still operating. It is now owned by George Armstrong.

### W. R. Hull

W. R. Hull and his brother Johnny, as very young lads, came from England to meet their uncle, Robert Roper, at Kamloops. They remained there for some years. In 1883, W. R. came through the mountains from Kamloops with a band of horses. He remained in Alberta and established a ranch southwest of Nanton. He sold out to a Scotch syndicate and bought another horse ranch, known as the Beaver Camp.

Mr. Hull was a large man physically and was very successful in his many business ventures. He had his ups and downs but weathered many storms and had a large outlook on life. He had a beautiful home in Calgary with well-kept gardens. He built a large business block in Medicine Hat and he became one of the best known of Southern Alberta pioneers.

### A. J. Day

Very little has been written about A. J. Day and yet he was a most colorful figure and an outstanding rancher in the days of the open range. He and his relatives brought into Southern Alberta 22,000 head of cattle and 700 horses. This stock had been shipped from Texas to Billings, Montana, and trailed from there to his 65,000-acre lease. He paid the Government \$40,000 in duty when he brought this herd across.

"Uncle Tony," as he was affectionately called, had been a prominent Texas cowman. As the range there became crowded, he "followed the grass" through the Western States and finally up to Alberta. Like



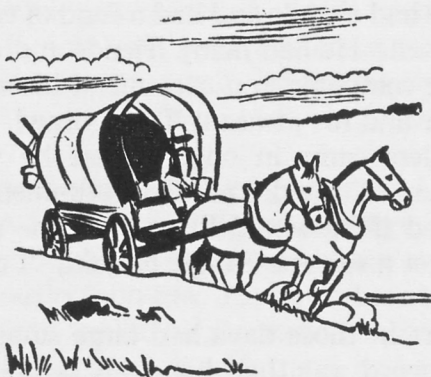
other pioneer ranchers, he faced many difficulties. There were prairie fires and drought. There were hard winters and packs of hungry wolves. The stock losses were often heavy but the story of the range stockmen forms an engrossing chapter in the history of the province.

Tony Day lived in the South in the days of slavery and brought one of his ex-slaves with him to Alberta. Like so many ranchers, Mr. Day was a philosopher. He always had a smile and had a fund of entertaining stories to tell. He had many friends and was always a welcome companion on account of his wisdom, his dry humor and his pleasant Texas drawl. When the homesteaders came in on his lease he was forced out of business. He did not like retirement and once when asked if he would like to resume ranching if he could get a suitable range, he said, "I'd fly at it."

Ranchers in those days had large sums of money and their word was their bond. A prominent cattle buyer—Mr. Fares—gave a man a substantial cheque for some cattle. The next year when Mr. Fares was starting west, the bookkeeper told him that this particular cheque had never been cashed. Mr. Fares found the rancher and asked about it. "It's all right," said the rancher. "You paid me and I lost the money. I will take the loss as it is my fault." The cattle buyer had some difficulty in explaining the situation and getting him to take another cheque.

Another Alberta rancher went with his fat cattle to Winnipeg. He was dressed in high boots and working clothes when he received a cheque for \$90,000 for the live stock. On leaving, when he tried to go through the gates used by Pullman passengers, a policeman stopped him and told him the homesteaders' excursion train did not leave Winnipeg until the next day. He was asked to show

his ticket. He reached in his pocket and brought out a long, narrow piece of paper. The suspicious police officer said, "Come with me." However, an explanation was given and the cattleman was allowed to board the train.



### *Storms*

*Life is mostly froth and bubble,  
Two things stand out like stone,  
Kindness in another's trouble,  
Courage in one's own.*

Before the turn of the century, life was not the same in Southern Alberta as it is today. Trains were running on the main line and on the narrow-gauge line to Lethbridge. The conductors knew about all the people on the line and the day-coach was a social centre to some extent. There were no automobiles and, as the roads were only trails, most of the travelling was done on horseback or on foot. The few ranches were widely separated and there were many large open spaces. The towns were small and, in general, everybody know everybody else. The places of business had large store-fronts and there were tie-posts and rails in front of every hotel and store.

Then, as now, storms would come early or late in the winter season. They would sometimes come with such sudden fury that there was great destruction. On one occasion, Messrs. Wallace & Ross had cattle in the Cypress Hills area. As the market was good, they arranged to ship a trainload of fat steers. The animals were gathered and were moving to the railroad when, without warning, a blinding blizzard started. The cattle would not face the storm and, in spite of the strenuous efforts of the riders, they scattered widely and drifted in many directions. Cold weather came on and, as there was no grass, many of the animals became weak, got down in the snow and never rose again. When spring came, very

few of the steers could be found alive and nothing was realized from this fine herd of beef cattle.

No sadder tragedy can be related than that which cost the lives of two heroic boys in November, 1892. Harold Walton, aged 10, and Moran Cochrane, aged 14, were riding their ponies along Bull's Head Creek when suddenly about 4 o'clock a blinding blizzard came upon them. They could not see and were forced to drift with the storm—with one result. Benumbed with cold and exhausted, the younger boy seems to have perished first. His body was found in six inches of snow, covered with the saddle and horse blanket. Moran's body was found a half mile farther on, face downward beside his pony with the bridle rein still held in his lifeless hand. He had fought desperately against the fatal stupor. After wrapping Harold in his coat and fixing the saddle and blanket to protect him as best he could, he had himself pressed onward in the pitiless storm to get help. Searching parties headed by the fathers, found the bodies at about 8 o'clock the next night.

Two stained glass windows were placed on the side walls of the chancel of St. Barnabas Church by Mrs. Cochrane and Mrs. Walton in memory of their young sons who lost their precious lives in this storm.

### **Rufus the Outlaw**

This is an outline of Colonel Steele's story about one of the finest looking horses that ever served in the North West Mounted Police Force. Seventeen hands high he stood, and in every way was a Goliath among the broncos of the western plains. Because none could ride him he was called Rufus the Outlaw. The veterinary who bought him thought he would make a beautiful charger for the Superintendent.

The man who sold him said, "I give you fair warning, that beast is a devil from the pit. If he turns out to be no good, don't blame me."

The broncho busters tried at great risk to tame him. However gently a saddle was put on his back, he would go wild. He would jump, kick and throw himself on the ground with great violence. He would break the ropes, snap and kick furiously at the men and usually gallop off by himself after the struggle.

"Buckskin Charlie", a star performer, rode him a few times and it looked as if he was conquered. Once he was in a parade before the Governor General when the sleeping demon in him awakened again. He tried every trick he know. He sunfished. He swapped ends. He threw himself over backwards and finally bolted.

Sergeant Reilly, a skilled horseman, took him out for a long ride one day. When returning to the barracks he bolted and got completely out of control. On the way they had to pass through the narrow street of a small town. It seemed absolutely necessary to stop him as there were people and wagons on the street. The Sergeant used every ounce of his great strength in hauling on the reins and shouting orders. Rufus did not heed. He had the bit between his teeth. He tore down the street while men, women and children fled to safety. The rider pulled until he actually bent the bit, but the horse raced on. A little girl fell in their path. Shrieks rose on every side. The mounted man tried to divert the horse but could not. Then just as he expected to see the child crushed, Rufus rose gently, leaped over her and went on. They reached the stable and horse and rider dashed in the open door with hardly an inch to spare.

“He’ll kill you”, the men said, but Reilly fed him sugar and talked gently to him. Rufus the Outlaw was not subdued. Reilly had many battles with him and many narrow escapes. He still did not want to part with this proud handsome horse in spite of the warnings of the other officers.

Then came a day when Sergeant Reilly was sent out on detachment. He had to make a trip over the unbroken prairie for one hundred miles. A brilliant sun was shining from a cloudless sky. The sun was too bright, for it turned the snow into one sea of aching light and on the third day Reilly found that the most frightful thing that could happen to anyone had happened to him. Alone in the wilderness he was snow blind and could see nothing. Seeking to relieve his eyes of their burning agony he got down and rubbed them with snow. The strange performance frightened Rufus who broke away. Reilly softly called the horse to lure him back. He tried to grope for the reins but only frightened the horse who kept just out of his way. The policeman tried vainly to catch the horse for an hour but he knew he could not leave the trail or he would be lost. The food and blankets were secured to the saddle and his situation desperate indeed. He walked on but as the snow was deeper and softer than he expected, he was soon exhausted. He blew his whistle. He fired his revolver and he continued to try to catch the horse without success.

Three days and three nights passed, when Reilly worn to a shadow, exhausted, starving and chilled to the bone, sank down in the snow completely beaten.

The stage was merrily bowling along when the passengers heard the persistent neighing of a horse. The stage horses answered.



“There’s something the matter”, said the driver, let’s investigate—whoa”. There lying in the snow all but dead was the policeman. Round him the snow was trampled with the hoof prints of two days’ passaging in the snow. Rufus the Outlaw stood by his master in his great distress and neighed for help. Hate and fury had long been pent up in his breast, but in the hour of great need he had been faithful to the man in scarlet.



## *The War Years*

The First World War and the Second World War brought sadness to many homes in Southern Alberta. The young men and young women enlisted in large numbers. There were many casualties, much bereavement and the economic life of the community was much disturbed.

Early in the last war, many unemployed secured work in munition factories. A Service Flying Training School was set up in Medicine Hat. There were a large number of bright young men from Britain and other parts of Europe trained there, where weather conditions were good. These men made a great contribution but the sad fact remains that nearly all of them were shot down and made the "supreme sacrifice" while flying over enemy territory.

A prisoner-of-war camp was constructed on Dunmore Hill and there were, at times, from 10,000 to 12,000 prisoners there. One young man from Redcliff was in Germany when the war started. He was enrolled in the German army, taken prisoner and sent to the Medicine Hat camp. In the cemetery there is a row of similar tombstones marking the last resting place of a number of the prisoners who died in the camp. Quite a number of the prisoners of war were allowed to work on farms. Their conduct was good and many of them were anxious to make homes in Canada.

An area about 30 miles square, north of Suffield, was secured as a British Experimental Station. The history of this area is of more than usual interest. In the early years of the century, the land was thrown open for homesteading. Men stood in line

before the land office for days and nights to file on quarter sections. When located, many lived in poor shacks and mostly alone. The good crops of 1915 and 1916 brought prosperity and many of the men had their families come to the district. Schools were built and a real community life was enjoyed. Then a long series of dry years followed. There were dust storms. There were withering winds when the crops were growing and, in the heat and drought, the crops perished and were not worth cutting. Many of the people moved out from this and other districts. They had given up hope. When driving through the area at this time, abandoned farms, unused schools and deserted homes could be seen along the road. The visitor would see the sadness of it all as expressed in the stanza:

*"The house that has echoed a baby's laugh  
And held up his stumbling feet,  
Is the saddest sight when left alone  
That ever the eye could meet."*

Some of the more persevering remained and among them there was a good community spirit. Groups of neighbors would meet on Sundays and one day of the summer was always set aside for a picnic at Bingville school. This picnic was always looked forward to and was the biggest day of the year for the lonely settlers.

In 1941, the news came that the area was needed for military purposes and the 125 remaining families had to prepare to move. These people had built homes and they loved those homes. They loved their community, but now they were to be scattered as were the Acadians in the story of "Evangeline." The annual picnic that year was a sad affair as all felt the strain. Men gathered in groups and talked of the future with misgivings. Women wept and even

children were less happy than usual. All recognized that they had come to the end of a chapter in the life of the community. In just one month these pioneers had all moved. The school was gone, the homes gone and the stock was moved out. Even the wild antelope were driven off so that experiments could be carried on.

The sacrifices were made in the interest of the war effort and public recognition is due these pioneers, some of whom were not adequately compensated.

## *The Homesteader*

*"God gave all men all earth to live,  
But since all hearts are small,  
Ordained that each one spot should prove  
Beloved over all."*

When the homesteads first became available there was a great rush by young men to file on them. They then built some sort of a little shack or sod house, did the required work of fencing and breaking up a number of acres of the prairie sod and waited for the three years until they could obtain title.

A homesteader was usually a bachelor. Some really did well. They proved up and sold out for a good price. Others were fortunate enough to locate in a good district and had the happy experience of seeing neighbors come in and later found themselves with a good farm in a well settled community.

Many, however, lived in remote areas long miles from any neighbor. Water was so scarce that gardens would not grow, crops put in by hard labor withered for lack of rain and gave no returns. These men had lonesome lives. Their shacks were small and often not clean. Their food lacked variety and was not a balanced diet. The nights were long and the howling of the prairie wolves disturbed their sleep and induced dismal thoughts of dread, fear and loneliness. Sometimes the homesteaders were not well and their minds ran along unhealthy lines. Often there was a real departure from the normal way of thinking and acting so that delusions existed. Some of them, not having normal food and rest, developed what was called "homestead insanity" and had to be taken by the Mounted Police and sent to mental hospitals for treatment.

Most of them, however, kept their heads and maintained their sense of humor. They would travel on foot long distances for companionship and make light of their troubles. One man had his toes frozen in the early winter. He treated the frost-bites as well as he could and by spring only one toe was black and painful. He was thoroughly fed up. He elevated the foot on the end of his bunk and shot the toe off with his trusty rifle.

In the years 1908 to 1913 the rural districts were settled rapidly. Many people who were looking for new homes shipped their effects along the Crow line to Seven Persons and they proceeded to their new homes with horses and wagons. The good crops in 1915-16 gave great hopes, but the long series of poor crops later brought many hardships and much poverty.

Parts of the country were settled by the homestead system copied from the United States settlement plan. The fourth meridian runs north and south about 30 miles east of Medicine Hat and the principal meridian is close to Winnipeg. The range lines run six miles apart, parallel to these meridians of longitude. The base is the international boundary line between Canada and the United States, that is, the 49th parallel of north latitude.

As these lines cross each other, the whole country is blocked off into squares six miles by six miles, called townships. Thus each township contains 36 square miles, each being called a section. A quarter of a section, that is 160 acres, was a homestead lot. For a time an adjoining quarter could be obtained as a pre-emption. During the years of the rush for this land, men and women could be seen standing in long queues for days and nights in front of the Medicine Hat Lands Title office, holding a place



when an area was being made available for entry. It was a case of first come first served and competition was keen.

A bachelor farmer, Robert Ferguson, lived in the Medicine Hat district. He always hoped that next year's crop would be good. One fall day he came in just beaming with happiness. "Well, I've made it," he said. "I'll go east and visit with friends for the next six months."

In just two weeks he was back. His whole appearance was one of dejection and hopelessness. He had visited the home of his birth. He had expected to find relatives, the country store with the tie-posts in front, the dusty roads and the log schoolhouse. The roads were paved and new blocks had been built. There were telephones, radios, departmental stores, street cars and shining autos. He could not find one person he had ever seen and not one who had ever heard of him. When had he left the east? "Oh," he said, "in the spring of '87."

During all the long years the scenes of his childhood had ever been before him. He had lived with memories of his boyhood companions—their bright faces and happy laughter. He had cherished the hope of seeing them all again, not realizing the changes of time.

A few weeks later a neighbor, not having seen him for awhile, entered his prairie shack. There he found the remains of this lonely man who had been sustained for so many years by visions of the past and hopes for the future.

## *Prairie Farm Rehabilitation*

In 1857, Captain John Palliser was commissioned to make a survey of the area from the North Saskatchewan River to the U.S. boundary, and from the Red River to the Rocky Mountains. In 1862 he made a complete report. He marked out an area of some 50 million acres, triangular in shape, that he considered to be unfit for agriculture. The base of the triangle was the 49th parallel of north latitude and the apex reached the 52nd parallel. It was the great short grass, treeless plain where the soil was light brown in color and low in organic matter. It was clear that the rainfall was usually deficient and Capt. Palliser reported that it was an area unsuited to agriculture. It was called the "Palliser Triangle."

While exploring the region, the party met an Indian with his head bound up in rags that were far from being clean. Dr. Hector offered to dress the wound properly but his offer was firmly refused. The man had been scalped and was very sensitive about it.

In the early years of the present century, many homesteaders settled on this particular land. Homes were built, roads were constructed and school districts were organized. There were good crops in 1915 and 1916, but after that, for many years, the searing winds and lack of rainfall caused almost complete crop failures. Deserted shacks and unused schools could be seen in many places along the road. On the door of one abandoned home the following was written:

*"Seven miles to water,  
Fifteen miles to wood;  
You can have my desert homestead  
I'm leaving it for good."*

Even the ranchers suffered as it took from 30 to 40 acres to feed one animal and often the water supply dried up. In those days, people watched for clouds, hoping and praying for rain and even paying some of their few remaining dollars to a rainmaker.

After much hardship and terrific disappointments had been endured, the Dominion Government in 1935 introduced the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act. The object was to store up moisture, classify the land and introduce better farming methods. Financial assistance has been given to construct 46,000 small and community stock-watering and irrigation projects. Some 500,000 acres have been included in the large irrigation projects and the medium-sized spring flooding schemes.

The venture has proven to be a great success. There now are sugar factories at Taber, Picture Butte and Raymond. These factories produce 150 million pounds of sugar a year. There are canning factories at Brooks, Taber and other places. A great start has been made but there is the possibility of irrigating three million acres in the West.

When the Rt. Hon. James Gardiner was opening the St. Mary's dam on July 16th, 1951, he said:

"It gives me great pleasure to turn the waters from the first nationally-constructed large reservoir upon the fertile lands of Southern Alberta. I consider the inauguration of this policy as the outstanding and most helpful achievement of my period as a Minister of Agriculture over 15 years. I hope it is only the beginning of a development that will multiply homes in the West."

## *Irrigation*

*The kiss of the sun for pardon,  
The song of the bird for mirth,  
One is nearer God's heart in the garden  
Than anywhere else on earth.*

—MARTIN BURRELL.

The word irrigation means the artificial application of water to the land. From remote antiquity and in many parts of the world, rainfall has been fitful or absent during the growing season, and irrigation has been used to produce food.

In Southern Alberta the moisture is used for grain, hay and vegetable crops. In Egypt its use is to grow cotton, in Africa, dates and other fruits, in China, rice, in Asia, mulberry for silkworms, and in Spain, for oranges. There are about 200 million acres of land in the world now being irrigated as follows:

India . . . . .	55,000,000	acres
China . . . . .	55,000,000	"
United States . . . . .	28,000,000	"
Russia . . . . .	8,000,000	"
Japan . . . . .	6,000,000	"
Egypt . . . . .	6,000,000	"
Australia . . . . .	1,000,000	"
Canada . . . . .	750,000	"

The Mormons in Utah turned a desert into gardens by private enterprise, but the stage has now been reached when the construction work is a matter of government concern.

### **The Bow River Development**

In 1922, the Southern Alberta Land Company was formed for the purpose of bringing under irrigation about 200,000 acres of a 530,000-acre block. Much of this land was in a triangle formed by the confluence of the Bow and Old Man rivers. The capital of the company was about \$13,500,000. This, and indeed other sums, were expended in buying land and constructing irrigation works. Medicine Hat was then and always has been the headquarters of this company.

The water intake is on the Bow River at Carseland, about 30 miles east of Calgary. The main canal from there runs southeasterly to Lake Macgregor. From this large reservoir the canal runs to the Little Bow reservoir and from there to a point a few miles northwest of Medicine Hat.

The scheme is feasible and an adequate supply of water is available but until recently little progress was made on account of the difficulties in getting an agreement among the three parties concerned, the two world wars and the depression with ruinously low prices for agricultural products. Water has been available for the Vauxhall area, at times with government help, but chiefly due to the vigorous management of D. W. Hays and those associated with him.

The Dominion Government purchased the project and an agreement was made with the Province of Alberta to complete the work. In a general way, the Dominion will construct the main reservoirs and the connecting canals. The money thus spent will not be recoverable. The Province will construct the ditches and distribute the water, recovering some of the costs from the water users.

These works will be permanent. It will be possible for the farmers to have gardens and flowers. They will also have livestock, dairy products and poultry. This will be a great blessing to this and future generations. When completed the St. Mary's irrigation project will bring moisture to nearly half a million acres between Lethbridge and Medicine Hat. The key structure is the large Spring Coulee reservoir located about 30 miles south of Lethbridge.

All water used in Southern Alberta comes from mountain streams flowing from the eastern slope of the Rockies. Steps taken to preserve the forests from fire, insects and lumbering interests have done much to insure a steady and ample flow of water.

### Redcliff

The history of Redcliff illustrates that a mistake can be made if industries are developed too rapidly.

Today, the Dominion Glass Company, three brick plants, greenhouses and potteries are operating in Redcliff. The population is about 1,600, but away back in 1912 there were 3,000 people there. In those long gone, but not forgotten days it was hoped that Redcliff would become a smokeless Pittsburgh. Many industries did start and three buses and 10 trucks were actually turned out.

In addition to real estate agents, boosters and boomers, there were some remittance men and other odd characters there. One of the latter group who attracted attention was a policeman who was obsessed with the thought that there were German spies all around. At dawn he could be seen on the hotel roof surveying the countryside for spies. Another odd character was called Buffalo Bill. He lived in a dugout near town. He never washed or cleaned



up, and was a great friend of John Barleycorn. He would ride to town on horseback, and depended on his horse to lead him home with the load he was carrying. When a War Loan canvasser called on him he came away with \$4,000.

Every remittance man enlisted at the start of the war. Evil days came owing to the war and a cyclone. The windstorm of 1912 blew many buildings down. In one case the top storey of one building was blown off and landed fairly. The people just moved into it in the new location and it is used to the present day.

The Ornamental Iron Works, the motor factory, the rolling mills and the hat, cap, shoe and furniture factories are all silent. There was no market for the product of these factories. There is now, and always has been, a good community spirit in this town, and with the coming of irrigation there are better days ahead.

### **The Rainmaker**

There had been many dry years and crop failures in the district, so in 1921 the people decided to engage a "rainmaker." Money was collected and Mr. Hatfield was engaged. The day he arrived a big banquet was arranged for him. The dining room at the Corona was filled and Mr. Ratcliff, a man weighing 360 pounds, filled the chair. There was much good-natured banter and joviality. Lawyers in humorous speeches promised to defend the guest in all the courts of the land if he were sued for bringing too much rain. When Mr. Hatfield replied, he promised to bring rain and to bring it in abundance. He had done it before and he could do it again. After luncheon, two wagon-loads of equipment were taken out to Chappice Lake, some 20 miles north. There,

a tower was erected and there was supposed to be some wonderful chemical in the trays in this tower that would send fumes up to condense the moisture in the clouds and cause rain over an area 100 miles in diameter.

For a few weeks there was rain and the trusting ones were jubilant. It was thought he was bringing too much rain. He began to get telegrams, e.g.: "Rain enough, stop for 3 days and take a holiday." Another read: "Bring a shower every 3 days, preferably at night."

However, later the hot winds came as usual and the crops withered. He was offered a contract for the next year which stated that he would be paid only if the rain came, but he never returned.

### The Neigel Case

In 1920, a murder trial of interest was held in Medicine Hat. It was a sad human tragedy and for 18 days the court room was crowded by people anxious to hear the sordid details.

In a district about 50 miles from Medicine Hat, two families lived on adjoining farms. They had been good neighbors until the following complications arose: According to the evidence, Adam Neigel made an agreement with the wife of his neighbor that he would do away with Mrs. Neigel if she would do away with her husband. Then the two would be married and have the two farms.

The story unfolded at the trial was that Adam came home from town one day with a bottle and asked his wife to have a drink. She took the drink and, almost at once, went into violent convulsions and died. She was buried but later suspicion was

aroused and her body was exhumed by police order. The woman on the other farm never carried out her part of the plot, but memories must have given her many unhappy moments during the years that have passed since this innocent wife and mother died. Mrs. Neigel, as you have surmised, died of strychnine poisoning. Doctors gave evidence as to the symptoms and were questioned at great length. A portion of the stomach contents of the deceased was injected into frogs and they at once went into violent convulsions and died. This was dramatic and convincing evidence to the jury that a murder had been committed.

Although the accused declared his innocence, the jury found him guilty and the judge in solemn words pronounced the fatal sentence. A few months later a sad procession might have been seen going from the death cell to the scaffold where the debt was paid and a young soul departed into the "Great Beyond."

## *Place Names*

Some records show that the Bow River got its name because wood of great resiliency, useful for bows, was found on its banks. Recently a story has been related that seems to be plausible:

The early French explorers followed the rivers, always travelling by canoe, where possible. A party paddling up the South Saskatchewan came to a fork in the river which was the confluence of two streams. To the right was a beautiful, turbulent stream and, to their left, was one equally beautiful and turbulent. They decided to call the first "Beau" and the second "Belle." The masculine gender of the French word meaning beautiful or big is "beau" and the feminine, "belle." So the rivers were known as the "Beau" and the "Belle." Men who followed the early French adventurers were not well informed on the correct spelling of the words and, in due course, the rivers became known as the "Bow" and the "Belly."

**ALDERSON** (formerly Carlstadt)—Named after a Canadian commander in the First World War.

**BELLECOT**—Mr. Cotterill was the C.P.R. superintendent and named the station after his wife, Mrs. Bella Cotterill.

**BASSANO**—Named after the Marquis of Bassano, a C.P.R. shareholder.

**BINDLOSS**—In 1914, after Harry Bindloss, a writer of Western novels.

**BOW ISLAND**—There is an island in the Bow River north of the town.

## PLACE NAMES

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**BOWELL**—Named after Sir Mackenzie Bowell, Prime Minister of Canada, 1894-1896.

**BROOKS**—1903, after N. E. Brooks, a divisional engineer of the C.P.R. He died at Sherbrooke, Que., in 1926.

**CALGARY**—Name suggested by Colonel Macleod in 1876, after his home town in the Isle of Mull, Scotland.

**CARDSTON**—After Charles Ora Card, the first president of the Mormon Church in Canada.

**DUNMORE**—Named after an early explorer—Lord Dunmore. As he was going westward on one occasion he killed a moose. When returning, he used the jawbone to repair his Red River cart and thus the city of Moose Jaw got its name.

**ETZIKOM**—1916, from a Blackfoot word meaning “valley” or “coulee.”

**EMPRESS**—1913, after Queen Victoria, Empress of India.

**GLEICHEN**—After Count Gleichen who travelled on the C.P.R. in 1883.

**IRVINE**—After Colonel A. Irvine, 1883-1885. He was a Commissioner of the N.W.M.P.

**LARMOUR**—1909, after R. E. Larmour, a general freight agent of the C.P.R.

**LETHBRIDGE**—After William Lethbridge, first president of the North West Coal and Navigation Company.

MANYBERRIES—1911, translated from the Blackfoot words “akonis kway.”

MACLEOD—After Colonel Macleod, who built the the fort there in 1874.

MEDICINE HAT—Perhaps no one knows just how the name came to be chosen. Below are two signed letters outlining about all the explanations:

“Dear Sir,

“The site of the present city is called Medicine Hat in the report of the Northwest Mounted Police for 1882 and about this year the first house was erected. ‘Medicine Hat’ is a translation of the Blackfoot Indian word, ‘saamis,’ meaning ‘head-dress of a medicine man.’ One explanation connects the name with a fight between the Cree and Blackfoot tribes when the Cree medicine man lost his bonnet in the river. Another connects it with the slaughter of a party of white settlers and the appropriation by the Indian medicine man of a fancy hat worn by one of the victims. One explanation is that the name was applied originally to a hill east of the town from the resemblance to the hat of a medicine man. This hill is styled Medicine Hat on a map of the Department of Interior in 1883. Another with the rescue of a squaw from the South Saskatchewan River by an Indian brave upon whose head a well known medicine man placed his hat as a token of admiration of the act of the rescuer. Still another story says the name was given to the locality because an Indian chief saw in a vision an Indian rising out of the South Saskatchewan wearing the plumed hat of a medicine man.

“Secretary of Geographic Board of Canada.”



“MEMORANDUM:

“To Senator Gershaw.

“Many years ago (1905), while in the Medicine Hat district, I made enquiries bearing on the origin of this unusual place name. There were many old Indians and white pioneers there and at Fort Macleod, and although from among them I gleaned many versions bearing on the subject, the one that appeared most authentic, and vouched for by most of the Indians whom I interviewed, runs as follows:

“The unusual name ‘Medicine Hat’ was the outcome of an Indian legend. While camped on the South Branch, a Blackfoot warrior had a vision. Ice covered the river, in the midst of which was a small patch of open water caused by the current. A figure appeared from this opening (some versions say an Indian chief, others a huge serpent) wearing an elaborate head-dress adorned with eagle plumes. It so happened that the young warrior at the time was courting the maiden of his heart, and was told that if he threw her to the underwater creature, he would henceforth be the greatest war chief in all his tribe. For the love of her barbaric fiancée, the girl acquiesced and was hurled beneath the water. Henceforth the place was known as the ‘Spot of the Medicine Hat.’

“J. P. Turner, R.C.M.P. Historical Research.”

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TURNER VALLEY—After Robert and James Turner who homesteaded in the north end of the valley in 1886.

WALSH—After Superintendent J. M. Walsh, 1873-1883, an inspector of the N.W.M.P.

WHITLA—After R. J. Whitla, a Winnipeg merchant who visited the place when the narrow gauge railway ran through to Lethbridge.

WINNIFRED—On map 888, after a relative of an English shareholder of the Alberta Railway and Irrigation Company.

RALSTON—1950, after Colonel Ralston, a Minister of Defence.

REDCLIFF—From the red color of the cliffs in the vicinity.

SUFFIELD—After Charles Habard, 5th Baron of Suffield, who helped to finance the C.P.R.

TILLEY—After Mr. Tilley, a director of the C.P.R.

## *Seven Persons*

There are several Browns mentioned in the records. There was John, Diamond R.—because his cattle brand was “Diamond R”, there was Poker Brown who loved to shuffle cards and Bull Brown, so named because he had 70 head of work steers. The Brown whose record was written up in an old issue of the Free Press was Kootenay Brown, so named because he could talk the language of the Kootenay Indians. Born of English parents, he was an Eton boy and an Oxford man. On the bookshelves of his cabin were the classics in science, art and literature. He and three companions were mining in B.C. It was not panning out well, so they started for the gold diggings on the Saskatchewan River and, after a few days, they camped on the Seven Persons Creek near what is now Medicine Hat. These are his words: “We climbed on one of the lowest mountains of the foothills and the prairie and as far as we could see was one living, moving mass of buffalo. Thousands were there and when we shot at them they would run off a few hundred yards and start grazing again.

“At a clump of trees near the Saskatchewan on the bank of the Creek, we stopped to eat. As we were resting we were surprised by a flight of arrows from a party of 32 Blackfeet Warriors. We thought the end was coming but we started firing and killed two Indians before they ceased shooting arrows and scampered off. I was struck on the back by an arrow and there was a deep wound. One of my companions poured turpentine into the wound and it was healed in a week. We could see the Indians swimming their horses across the river as they made off to the north.”

There is some mystery about the name “Seven Persons”. Later, Kootenay Brown visited the site

of the battle. He found the skulls of the two Indians and also extracted 5 bullets from the Creek bank. At least, the word "Seven" is suggested and the village was named after the Creek. He reports that there were great herds of Antelope in the area and every lake and slough was literally alive with myriads of water fowl.

## *A Cowboy's Farewell*

A large crowd of people lined the streets of Medicine Hat on Saturday afternoon, July 4th, 1953. They were witnessing a unique farewell to a much loved rancher "Barney" Simpson, long noted for his cheerfulness and spontaneous friendliness. The mile-long procession included 21 mounted cattlemen. It was marshalled by D. A. Sholten, Managing Director of the Stampede Company and Chief A. R. Bull. The impressiveness of the ceremony was felt by all. Lorne Thompson, mounted on a black horse led the parade and few eyes were dry when they saw Barney's favourite saddle horse following, riderless, carrying saddie and bridle with the late owner's boots reversed in the stirrups and the spurs hanging down. Then followed the mounted guard of honor consisting of Mack Higdon, Henry Mitchell, James Mitchell, Tom Hargrove, George Murray, Eugene Burton, Paul Hester, Harris Garlough, Barney Crockett, Dunc Sanderson, Lorne McCraig, R. E. Page, Dr. H. C. Dixon, George Henschel, Claude Hossard, Jack Hellowell, P. A. Yeast and Joe Wells.

The Honorary Pallbearers were Bob Boyd, Dave Gill, Bob Black, Charlie Archer, Wallace Nichol, Vic Headloff, Tom Owens and Ralph Hatton.

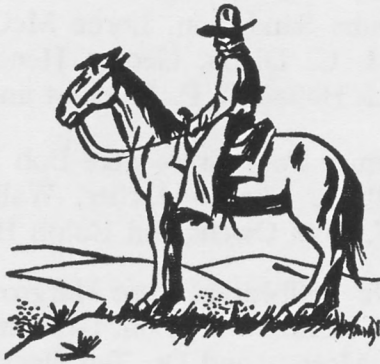
The Active Pallbearers were Hargrove Mitchell, Angie Sauer, Donnie Morrison, Graham Ellis, Reg. Rose, Dr. J. Morrow and Dr. Ted Slack.

The passing of Barney Simpson made a void in the ranks of the public spirited group of ranchers who have done so much to develop the industry and to organize the stampedes which add so much to the happiness of the community life of those who live in the remote ranching areas.

Mr. Simpson had a large ranch in the Wildhorse district and was well known and very well liked by all who knew him.

In 1910 he was married to Miss Florence McKay who survives him. Four of the seven children are living. The three children who preceded him were Ora and Homer who were killed in Korea in 1951 serving with the paratroopers, and little Milton was lost in a storm.

No ranch home in the South country is better known and no family is more popular. The affairs will be carried on by Joseph (a son), and all the friends and neighbours extend the most sincere sympathy to Mrs. Simpson and the remaining members of the family.





## *Writing on Stone*

One of the places in Southern Alberta that must have an interesting history is "Writing on Stone" and the park area surrounding it. The formation there is so unusual that it is a favorite picnic place for those in the district. There is limestone there in great large pieces, uncovered by soil or vegetation. Tunnels have been burrowed through it in places large enough to walk through. Cavities have been washed out, surrounded by upright banks, vertical and in some places overhanging. These banks are of white, soft limestone and, as you walk around, you seem to be going through the ruins of some ancient castle whose grandeur has departed and whose walls are crumbling with the passing of centuries. On some of the walls and in some of the caves and tunnels there are hieroglyphics of some ancient wanderers who have long ago ceased to exist. There you see strange letters and forms. There are drawings of fish and prehistoric animals, illustrations of dwellings or tents and drawings that look like the faces and forms of people. Other imperfect diagrams look like bows and arrows, clubs and other implements of warfare. There are rounded forms that look as if the waters of some ancient river had washed away the softer material and left only huge posts and arches of the firmer stone. During late years, parts of the walls on which there was writing in these strange characters have crumbled in ruins and whole slabs have been chipped off and carried away by destructive souvenir hunters. It may have been a haven of rest for nomadic groups of people who would be tired from travelling over the dry prairies. Certainly, in the days of long ago, human beings tarried there and, by their writings on stone, left an almost permanent record of some features of their civilization.

## *River Transportation*

Shortly after the C.P.R. reached Medicine Hat, Elliott Galt built several steamers and barges to haul coal from near Lethbridge to the railway at Medicine Hat. During the Rebellion of 1885, one of these boats, the S.S. Baroness, was used to take supplies to Batache. Only one trip was made and it was slow and laborious.

Another boat called the "May Queen" was built in Selkirk, Manitoba, and shipped by rail to Medicine Hat. It drew five feet of water when loaded and the depth of the South Saskatchewan River most of the way was only four feet. However, several trips were made as far down as Saskatoon with coal and groceries for the new settlement there.

The first store opened in Saskatoon was supplied with these groceries. The scheme was not a success and the engine was taken out of the boat and used for a flat-bottomed boat at Prince Alberta.

In the "nineties," Capt. H. H. Ross, a son of Sir Charles and Lady Ross of Rossie Castle, Scotland, built the Assiniboia Hotel in Medicine Hat. In 1889 he had built the S.S. Assiniboia. With a party of friends he made a trip down stream to Cedar Lake near Lake Winnipeg. Here the Assiniboia ran on a shoal. The owner gave all the food on board to two Indians to stand on guard for the winter and left for Egypt. The boat was completely destroyed by the spring ice and flood waters. When Capt. Ross returned he still wanted a boat, so in 1906 he built the S.S. City of Medicine Hat. This was a fine steamer, 130 feet long, and it survived the rapid current and spring ice for two years. In 1908, when

on a cruise, she hit a cable strung along the big bridge as Saskatoon and keeled over. The Captain decided to move farther down stream, where navigation was safer. He formed the Ross Navigation Company at The Pas and for years owned many boats for pleasure cruising and for hauling ore from the copper mines to the railway. One boat, the Nipawin, had state-rooms for 20 passengers. The others were the Sam Brisbin, the Minasin, the Notor, the O'Hell and the Tobin.

The keels of every one of these boats lie beside the Saskatchewan River that wrecked each and all of them. Even Captain Ross, who spent most of his life along the river, lies beneath a wooden cross within sight of its turbulent waters at Big Eddy.

The above details are recorded by Marjory Wilkins Campbell. She gives in a book, "Saskatchewan," a thrilling description of the river and a history of events that took place along its borders.

## *The City*

Medicine Hat was one of the first cities to own and control its public utilities. The Gas, Water and Electric Departments have been reliable sources of revenue.

In recent years the Mayor's chair has been occupied by the following: A. C. Hawthorne, I. Bullivant, Walter Huckvale, Hector Lang, Mack Rae, Wilson Riley and Harry Veiner. All have made contributions and have devoted their best energies to the welfare of the City. Others like R. C. Black, A. P. Burns, B. F. Souch, Mack Higdon and D. A. Scholton have given freely of their time and have been very successful in promoting activities that have been a great benefit to the City and surrounding country. Many of these men have perhaps not received the recognition that was due them. However, these things bring their own reward. Cattlemen like Henry Cavan, George Murray, Lorne Thompson and others have never failed to respond and contribute their best energies to public activities with no thought of anything except the service to the community.

When the days of the "Open Lease" and the "Golden Age of Ranching" had passed, Medicine Hat was chiefly a railway centre and, for a time, most of the revenue came directly or indirectly from the C.P.R. payroll. When the country became settled, prosperity of the City depended on crop conditions and they were often bad.

The abundant supply of natural gas attracted industries. When the flour mills and greenhouses were established, there was more employment and the town rapidly took on the appearance of a city.

The growth has not been steady and the trend has not always been upward. During World War II there was a lot of unemployment. The Dominion helped by giving contracts for the manufacture of shells, locating a Prisoner-of-War Camp on Dunmore Hill and the huge Experimental Station at Ralston. These things, together with the cooperation of the Dominion and Provincial Governments on Irrigation have made the future secure.

Mayor Veiner and the 1955 Council have seen the City grow rapidly. Country people have come to live in the city. There has been a lot of building and new industries like the Nitro-Chemical Plant were being established. Roads, schools, churches and hospitals were being constructed to keep up with the growth.

It is a City of beautiful flowers and attractive homes and, if those who gave the place the mysterious Indian name could see it now, they would realize that their dreams had come true.

## *Persons*

For many years it was believed that women could not be appointed to the Senate of Canada. The B.N.A. Act said that "persons" could be chosen but it was argued that the Fathers of Confederation had thought that men only would be chosen.

Five women in Alberta:

Mrs. Henrietta Edwards,  
Magistrate Emily F. Murphy,  
Mrs. Nellie McClung,  
Mrs. Louise McKinney and  
Honourable Irene Parlby

were not convinced that this view should be held forever. They had the case considered by the Supreme Court of Canada and the decision was that women were not eligible. The case was taken to the foot of the throne and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council decided that women were persons and could occupy Senate seats. Since that time such appointments have been made and there are five women senators at present among the 90 members.

The five Alberta women deserve great credit for their persistent action in upholding their rights. None of these five women received the recognition that was due but they had the satisfaction of having definitely advanced the status of women in the parliamentary sphere. Their names appear on a well-designed plaque hung in a prominent place in the building so future generations will realize what they accomplished.

### *Conclusion*

Since Alberta became a province in 1905, there have been two World Wars and a great depression. These wars caused more death and destruction, more sadness and suffering than any previous conflicts. Lest the memory of those dreadful days grow dim, it seems to be the duty of those of this generation to teach children something of the horror and grimness of war—teach something of the causes of war so that resort to arms will be forever banished from the earth as a means of settling differences.

In the short grass area, the great depression brought soil erosion, dust storms, drought, crop failure, ruinous prices and despair. Wheat sold for 26-30 cents per bushel, cattle at  $1\frac{3}{4}$  cents a pound and wool for 4 cents a pound. The area, in spite of these disasters, has become populated by loyal and industrious people. Schools, hospitals, roads and churches have been constructed, towns and cities have sprung up and, on account of the automobile and the radio, life has become more interesting. The land that Captain Palliser explored for the British Government just 100 years ago, classed as being unfit for agriculture, has produced much food. It has become the dwelling place of contented people. What the future holds, no one can tell, but, as long as the spirit of good will, friendship and neighbourliness persists, disaster need not be feared.

















